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ABSTRACT

Three 1991 issues of a British journal for modern language teacher trainers are provided. Articles include the following: "Perspectives on the In-service Training Needs of Non-native Speaking Teachers of English to Youth Learners" (Jennifer Jarvis); "Royal Society of Arts Certificate Trainees Speak Out" (Mario Rinvolucri); "Medical Education as Abuse" (John Collier); "Getting Mileage Out of Delayed Feedback" (Ray Parker); "The Pre-service/Initial Education of Teachers in Finland" (Aarno Ronko and others); "Preparing Second Language Teachers for the 21st Century" (F. Gomes de Matos); "Language and Gender in the EFL Classroom" (Jenny Pugsley); "The Changing Faces of Materials Production on the Diploma in Teaching Studies" (Dee Uprichard); "An Entrance Test for a One Month Intensive Pre-service TESOL Training Course" (Seth Lindstromberg); "Nominal Group Technique" (Les Embleton); "Peer Teaching, the Argentine Method" (Donard Britten); "In-service Observation: Reasons and Roles" (Bill Johnston); "Foreign Language Vocabularly Learning and the Pace of Instruction" ((Peter Preece); "Thoughts after NELLE" (Patrick Philpott); "A Jazz Chant for Use in a Teacher Training Session" (Greg Acker); "Letter to a Trainee from an Ex-stammerer" (Mario Rinvolucri); "More Hurdles: Becoming a Teacher Trainer" (Ruth Wajnryb); "Training Teachers of Business English" (Bill Reed); "Towards Reflective Teaching" (Jack Richards); "The Case for No 'T.P. Points' on RSA/UCLES Certificate Courses" (Barbara Garside); "The Use of Self-Evaluation in Teacher Training" (Kari Smith); "When Should I Correct? The Use of Algorithms in Teacher Training" (Mike Randall); "The Cost of Failure" (Kate Pearce); "The Management of Change"; (Tom Hutchinson); "The Communicative Teaching of Vocabulary; Presenting New Items" (Linda Taylor); "Exorcism as a Tool in Teacher Training: The 'Observed Lesson'" (Martin Parrott); and "The Supermarket: A Frame for Short, Intensive, In-Service Training Courses?" (Byran Robinson). (LB)

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume five Number one

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Process options, Trainer background, People who train people, Observation and feedback, Training around the world, Book review and publications.

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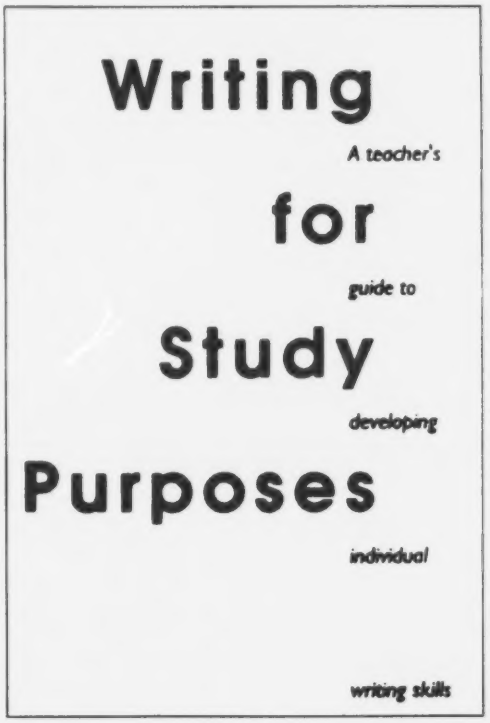

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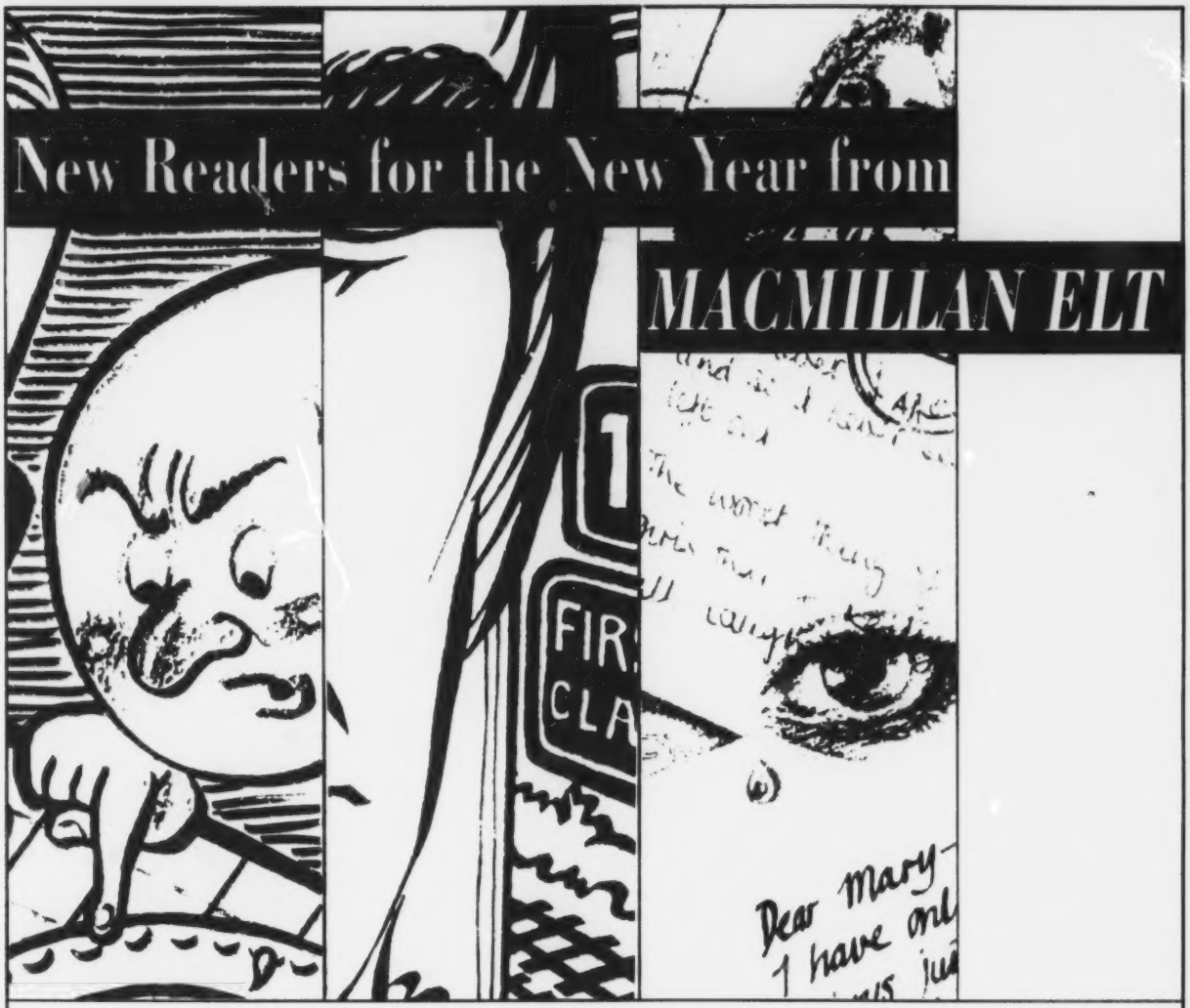

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EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to volume five and a new colour cover! I have had to put the price up a little this year to help cover the increases in postal charges over the last few years. The journal is still much cheaper than most similarly specialised publications though as our aim is to keep it thoroughly affordable.

Our lead article this time is from Jennifer Jarvis at the University of Leeds who has taken time and trouble to investigate the real needs of in-service, non-native speaking teachers. Jennifer starts the theme of this issue which is aimed at bringing out the trainees' view of training. Mario Rinvolucri interviewed some pre-service trainees on their (R.S.A.) course and their mid-course views on fatigue and stress can be heard loud and clear. The other article on the trainee-voices theme is by John Collier and reprinted with permission from The British Medical Journal. Formerly a lecturer in psychiatry, John Collier has now emigrated to Canada. Once you've read his provocative remarks on medical education, you might guess one reason why!

The Teacher Trainer regularly runs series on different themes. Not all themes appear in each issue. In this issue we welcome back:

Process Options This column deals with different ways that training sessions can be organised rather than with the content they contain. This time Tim Murphey uses 'Insearch' as a way of harnessing trainee experience as input on a course.

Observation and feedback This column deals with practical ideas for use in the supervision of teachers. In this issue Ray Parker shares with us a way of structuring delayed feedback around teaching practice diaries.

Training around the world The country we visit this time is Finland where an integrated model of language training and teacher education is used.

Trainer background Articles in this series aim at keeping trainers clued up about recent ideas and developments so that they can remain informed and useful to the teachers they work with. Jenny Pugsley visits this column to deal with sexism in language learning.

Book Review The book this time is Adrian Doff's 'Teach English'. The main comment is from Ruth Wajnryb but Mario Rinvolucri couldn't resist adding his two-penny worth!

Sara Walker shares with us two more of her great teacher training games. There will be more of these next issue too.

Thanks as ever are due to Lesley Upton who pastes up the journal, and to all our cartoonists for bringing the pages to life. And to you for continuing to support us with subscriptions, comments, letters and articles. Thanks - and I hope you enjoy this issue!

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

COMMENT

Just a few thoughts in response to Leslie Wolff's piece TRAINERS GIVING INSTRUCTIONS OR IS THIS CLEAR? (vol. 4 no. 2):

I, too, have often been amazed at other people's capacity for "misunderstanding" what I want them to do, particularly since it isn't solely, or even mainly, a language problem: speakers of English are as inventive as anyone in this field. Of course, "misunderstanding" is an unfair word to use. Sometimes I might be at fault in not being as clear as I could be, while at other times different understandings of the same words are just a fact of communication: meanings intended and constructed by speakers and listeners don't overlap, or mirror each other, exactly, and while this often doesn't matter, it sometimes does, as we see when people do the "wrong" thing.

For a listener, there may be a **lack** of clarity, or there may be a clarity **different from the speaker's**. The first will be recognised as a problem; the second won't. In either case, there's certainly a lot to be said for the kind of "reflecting back" and checking techniques that Leslie describes.

But I don't think it's necessarily wrong to let an activity start, listen in to what's happening, and **then** intervene and redirect where necessary, working with individuals and small groups, because:

- Participants may not realise something isn't clear until they start trying to do it
- They may be more willing to say they aren't sure about something in conversational mode with the group leader than they would be in a whole-group forum
- It may be easier for the leader to "negotiate meaning" with individuals or small groups than with the whole group
- Dwelling on instructions can be time-consuming and can come across as patronising
- It can also happen, sometimes, that an activity is enriched and improved by differential interpretation.

This is not to suggest that we shouldn't strive for clarity first time round - I think this is essential for anyone in a teaching role - but we can probably never guarantee it, because clarity is subjective, and I don't think that being prepared for some negotiation of understanding during activities is an admission of inadequacy. So these remarks are intended as an additional perspective on Leslie's suggestions, not an argument against them.

Finally, an instance of a clearly-understood instruction from a lesson I saw a while ago: the teacher set up an information-exchange exercise, with the learners facing each other holding their pieces of material. By way of checking her instructions, she asked the class if they were going to look at each others' material. One of them said, with an expression of intense seriousness on his face and a resolute shake of the head: "No ... never!"

Jonathan Marks

PERSPECTIVES ON THE IN-SERVICE TRAINING NEEDS OF NNS TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

by Jennifer Jarvis,
University of Leeds

Introduction

In this paper, I should like to focus on in-service teacher training, and relate what I say specifically to teachers who work in under-resourced, bureaucratic and centralised education systems. The paper is an attempt to clarify a perspective on the needs of such teachers, who make up the majority of those with whom I work.

Perhaps many of us working on INSET courses have frequently to grapple with a sense of fraud. If INSET is about helping teachers attain attitudinal and behavioural change, what ideas have we to offer, in Britain, usable in primary schools in Pakistan, or Czechoslovakia, or Tanzania? In primary ELT, do we cope with the anomaly of offering change experiences based on British primary ideology - with its one class teacher, who believes in teaching the 'whole child', and who teaches a teacher-devised 'whole curriculum' by an experiential learning approach? Do we use this ideology with a Tanzanian teacher who has 35 minutes of English, based on one textbook, with 85 ten-plus year olds in a small chair-less, paper-less room next to the Head-teacher's office?

The paper, then, is an attempt to share with you some steps towards a perspective on what such teachers may need in our INSET courses.

Reflections on professional practice

Like many others, I have been influenced by Donald Schön's idea of the 'reflective practioner' (Schön 1983), with its stress on the importance of the teacher reflecting on what s/he does in his/her work context, seeing alternatives and planning action. However, I wanted more understanding of **why** this might be a viable approach, and it is this which I would like to share with you.

An obvious first step was to take the idea of professional career development seriously, and try to find out how the teachers saw their career development and their specific needs. If I understood these more fully, I hoped it might be easier to give meaning to helping teachers reflect on their own experience.

I will illustrate an approach to this in a small study of 33 teachers from 15 different countries who came to study in Leeds in 1989. They were all English teachers at primary level, or primary advisors/inspectors.

Questionnaire

The teachers filled in a simple questionnaire before their courses really began, and I also had an informal discussion with most of them. These teachers are a sample from three different courses - a summer school for primary teachers, a country-specific short course for primary teachers and an advanced Diploma course. Their ages and years of experience varied greatly, from a 21 year old to a teacher of 51. One teacher had only two years experience, while others had 25 or more. I am not making any claims for the significance statistically of the findings, I am merely using them as illumination, or perhaps a provocation to thought.

After questions about their job and work context, the teachers answered questions about their needs and aims. These included:

a) What developments in yourself as a teacher would you like to see in the next few years?

b) What experience do you already have which gives you a good start in that direction?

c) What skills, knowledge or experience do you feel you need?

d) What do you feel are the greatest obstacles to your development?

e) What do you expect to gain from your course in Leeds?

(based on Garry & Cowan 1986)

These questions are actually quite demanding, and respondents were able to take the questionnaire away overnight to ponder what to say. If you think of what you might respond yourself, you will see the demands. It was quite a new experience for some teachers to be asked to articulate ideas about their career development, though all, I suspect, had ideas on the subject. They may not, of course, have wanted to share them all.

I will summarise the findings as briefly as possible:

a) All 33 respondents, across ages, years of experience, and whether they taught in the public or private sector, said they wanted to improve their 'techniques' or 'methods' or to learn 'up-to-date' approaches to teaching their pupils. This was by far the most important need felt by the teachers.

b) 18 of the 33 said they felt the need to improve their own English. This need did not seem to me to be always related to actual low levels of competence in English. Interestingly, 12 of the 18 had long years of experience - yet still felt very unconfident. Their self-doubts were very real.

c) 8 of the teachers said that their aim was to help their pupils enjoy the learning more, they wanted to know how to motivate their pupils in what they felt was not a supportive environment for learning.

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d) 7 of the teachers said that they wanted to share experiences with other teachers on the course, and learn from them. They clearly valued the opportunity to mix with teachers from different contexts.

e) 6 said they wanted to learn more about how children learn, in order to be more effective in their teaching. They showed an interesting sense here of having questions for which they sought answers. Most of these teachers had under 9 years experience of teaching.

f) 5 said they wanted greater skills in classroom management, particularly how to group pupils in different ways. Again, this response suggested some kind of personal agenda.

g) 4 wanted to be better able to produce their own materials, and linked this with a lack of materials in their context.

h) 2 wanted their course to lead to the opportunity for further studies, and this is a perennial desire, which may have been held by more than stated it.

i) 1 wanted to improve communication between the teacher and pupils, which again showed an interesting awareness of a preferred form of development. This particular teacher was still quite new in the profession.

I have listed these responses more or less in the wording the teachers used, as I found it interesting to see what they selected in a situation where their response was completely free. It is clear from the responses, that the teachers are focussed on the classroom, and on adding to their stock of methods. One often hears slightly scornful or rueful references to teachers' desire for 'tips' or 'recipes', but I hope to show later why we could, as an alternative, consider this an extremely valuable felt need on the part of teachers, which we could understand and support.

The obstacles the teachers mentioned were also illuminating.

a) The major obstacle was seen as lack of textbooks, or inadequate textbooks or materials (10). This was also seen as general lack of resources (5). The problems in inadequate funds for education therefore loomed large for nearly half the teachers.

b) Perhaps related in the teachers' minds was the general lack of well-trained teachers in the system they were in (10). One commented on the teachers' unwillingness to accept new ideas, and several mentioned that the untrained teachers in their system also had very low levels of competence in English. This obstacle was linked to a sense of lack of helpful colleagues and administrators. Other people were portrayed as often defensive or inadequate. It is obviously harder to get informal self-help teachers' support groups going if many teachers are operating at the level of bare survival in the system. This seems to result in the teachers having a sense of isolation in their work.

c) Teachers also saw their socio-linguistic situation as inimical. Several commented on how little English was used in their environment (5), or said they had no contact with native speakers (1), or lived in an isolated rural environment (1). One also said that the low status of English in his country was a major obstacle in his career. Overtly political factors also adversely affected two teachers, whose schools were closed for long periods during political upheavals. These larger structural factors were therefore seen as real problems by some of the sample of teachers (10).

d) The sense of isolation was also reflected in teachers who mentioned the lack of opportunities for further study, or lack of time for reading. One also said that his low salary was a major obstacle. These again seem perceived obstacles related to wider institutional or structural factors (8). Factors related to school organisation were also mentioned, such as large classes to teach, lack of time in the day for English, and a mix of ages in one class (3).

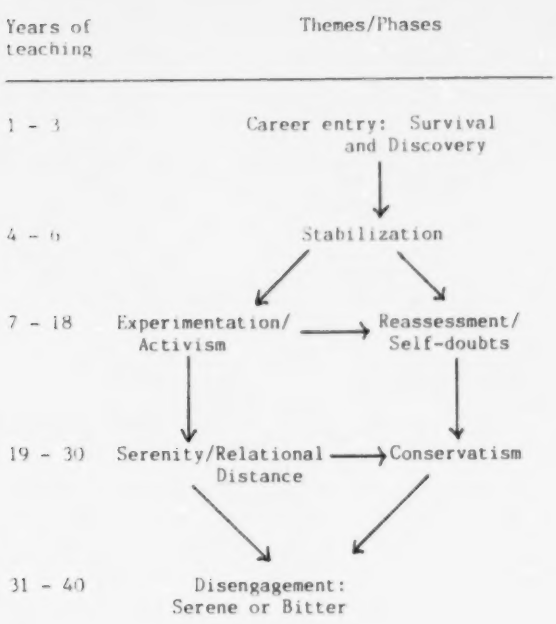
e) Personal obstacles were mentioned, but to a lesser extent than the institutional. They included low levels of competence in English (3), and lack of knowledge about learning (2).

While these responses will be familiar to many, I have felt it worth detailing them because they underline teachers' overriding concern with methods of teaching, and with the wider structural constraints of the context in which they teach. It seems to me important to try to understand more about both, and to think out their implications for training.

Life-cycle research

In trying to do this, I have found work by Michael Huberman (1989) very helpful. Huberman has worked in Switzerland, in the Geneva canton. While the system there can in no way be considered underresourced, it is, according to Huberman, heavily monolithic. He gives the impression of a strong bureaucracy and a homogeneous school system. In this sense it relates to the strongly centralised systems of most of the teachers with whom I work. The other helpful relationship is that in his work, Huberman has drawn on life-cycle research, to try to illuminate the different reactions of teachers at different stages in their careers. His work therefore seems to have something to say to any professional teacher, and I should like to give a brief description of it, and to try to relate it to the responses my teachers gave to questions about their careers.

Huberman suggests that we can plot trends in careers, roughly related to years of teaching, but not fixed to these in any individual case. He gives a very helpful summary of life-cycle research:



Successive themes of the teacher career cycle: schematic model (Huberman 1989)

We start at the beginning of our career with mere **survival**, as we face the shock of classroom reality, its difference from the ideal. This can lead into a period of **discovery**, when teachers begin to enjoy having their own classes, and trying out new roles and methods.

The next main phase he calls **stabilization**, when the teacher commits herself to teaching, and sees it as 'my career'. The teacher develops greater mastery of teaching, and develops a repertoire to fit most of the situations she meets. From this, the teacher finds the style most congenial to her.

Following this, many teachers go through a stage of **experimentation**, when they deliberately try out new ideas, pupil groupings etc. Huberman calls it 'pedagogical tinkering', in the sense that teachers experiment with small ways of increasing their effectiveness.
Some teachers may also move to greater **activism**, where they attempt to change institutional factors, take on new responsibilities, seek promotion, and try to avoid growing stale.
It can lead to a stage of **reassessment and self-doubt**, and to disenchantment with the effect of the reforms attempted - the mid-career crisis familiar in many fields.

Some may, however, move to a period of **serenity**, of increased confidence and self-acceptance. With increasing age, there is also greater age-distance between the teacher and the pupils. Some teachers, in contrast, move to **conservatism**, bemoaning change, and resisting further innovation.

The final period is one of **disengagement**, when the teacher withdraws from investment in work and engages more in other pursuits, outside teaching. Reflectiveness and internalisation may mark this period, and the ceding of the teacher's place to younger colleagues.

Huberman found that the teachers he studied in the Geneva system followed four main routes through their career. The younger teachers (5-10 or 11-19 years experience) mainly followed paths of:

a) **Painful beginnings** (overload of work, anxiety, difficult pupils and colleagues etc.) to

Stabilisation to **Experimentation.**

b) **Painful or easy beginnings** to **Stabilisation** to **Reassessment & self-doubt** where feelings of being in the wrong career, boredom, nitpicking colleagues etc. dominated.

Older teachers (11-19 & 20-29 years in teaching) showed in their later years two main routes:

c) **Stabilisation** to **Reassessment** to either **Non-resolution** where their very intense reassessment phase was not resolved, and they remained disillusioned with teaching, and dismissive of largely Ministry inspired reforms 'we're drowning in paper-work' etc.

or **Resolution**, where teachers were reconciled to their work by deliberately introducing some novelty or challenge every 4/5 years; or where they reconciled themselves by reducing their personal investment in teaching, and taking up more outside school activities.
Huberman found fewer achieved resolution than remained in a non-resolved state. This was because these teachers stayed in their system long enough to see the meagre results of the changes they'd worked for, and felt they had very low return for the effort they had put in. Changes were watered down, and because the teachers had little chance of career mobility, they were still there to see this.

d) **Renewal** even after major structural reforms in the system.
Teachers here achieved renewal by positive focussing on a small part of the change, and working out a small path for themselves in it. Or they did this by withdrawing to more outside interests.
They were distinguished from another group who also focussed on a small part of the reform, but with very defensive attitudes, and disenchantment and bitterness at what they saw as the failure of the reforms, or at the ways of administrators. They felt a sense of betrayal.

Huberman's work seems to me to be intuitively valid, in that I recognise many teacher reactions in what he depicts. I also find the

idea of life-cycles in teaching helpful in in-service training. We perhaps do not pay enough attention to where teachers are in their career and to the pressures they face within their systems. Nor do we always give sufficient weight to the perceptions of teachers who have been in similar posts for many years; their lack of movement often because they have few chances for mobility within their system.

Some implications

What implications for inservice training can we deduce from my survey and from the life-cycle research?

1. My first suggestion is that we should cease to condemn teachers' search for tips for teaching, or additional methods. Rather we should seek to understand and use this need. My teachers all wanted to renew their teaching methods. Huberman suggests that teachers who concentrate on classroom-level experiments are **more** satisfied than teachers who invest in larger-scale school-wide projects. Classroom-based experimentation is also amenable to more frequent use, so preventing the boredom of long years in teaching. Huberman says:

'Tending one's private garden pedagogically speaking, seems to have more pay-off in the long haul than land reform, although the latter is perceived as stimulating and enriching while it is happening'. (p.31)

While it may look rather defeatest to suggest we deliberately use teachers' interest in small-scale classroom change, I feel it might have much greater chance of success than larger missions to introduce activity-based approaches, or communicative teaching per se. Monolithic systems are inimical to individual large-scale action, particularly where teachers work in a great deal of professional isolation, and collaborative work with colleagues is rare. It is not so much that apsects of British primary methods are irrelevant to third-world contexts as that teachers are led to see them as a seamless approach which can be adopted wholesale. It is not surprising if this is rejected as unworkable. Giving awareness of alternatives, and of the possibility of making choices within these alternatives is perhaps a more feasible aim, because it fits with the area of individual control and choice the teacher has.
I feel that this awareness also helps me understand why Schön's (1983) and Ramani's (1987) ideas of reflection on practice, trial of alternatives, and attempts at adaptation; or 'theorizing from the classroom' have validity. Theory here is built on classroom practice, the area in which teachers have a chance of making informed, responsible choice. Many of the alternatives giving choice can come from the sharing of the practices of other teachers, and this is a particularly persuasive means of encouraging change. Some of our teachers will be activists, and be able to work within their constraints for larger change. Helping them reflect on practice and see alternatives can only assist them too.

2. My teachers' responses reinforce for me the power of the constraints imposed by their conditions of teaching. Most work in systems with:

Externally imposed curricula and exams
Teacher-dominated styles of teaching
NNS teachers of English
Large classes
Fixed furniture
Lack of materials/resources
Teacher isolation.

Perhaps our training courses could look at the educational issues these conditions present, and we could situate our work on language teaching within frameworks of:

Teacher language in the classroom
Children's ways of learning
Coping with large classes
Adding to resources

This might be a classroom-centred way of meeting the teachers' expressed needs.

3. Trainers, like teachers, are involved in professional life-cycles, and at this stage in mine I feel the need to reexamine my beliefs about teaching and learning. There is a growing body of research into the limitations of the ways in which experiential learning has been implemented, and a reassessment of alternatives. Mercer and Edwards (1987) have done some fascinating research on British primary schools, and shown that children can happily perform learning tasks **without** drawing the learning conclusions we hope they will. They need overt support to see the purposes and principles behind the activity. Perhaps adults are often in the same position when it comes to teaching techniques. Not all learning takes place through the route of direct experience - there is a place for telling, sharing, showing and modelling. Within approaches which help teachers reflect on experience, it seems to me there is a place for the **articulation** of the teacher's practice; **statement** of the theoretical reasons for choosing alternative x or keeping the practice; and **overt discussion** of the learning principles behind activities. I do not find it valid to assume these are drawn through the performance of a task, for I have had too much proof to the contrary. Feedback from teachers is that they value such overt support, and, also, learn ways of drawing out principles for themselves from having ways modelled with them.

4. Lurking around any training situation is the notion of a 'good teacher' - never fixed but always being refined throughout one's career. In addition to all the familiar and useful self-questioning check-lists, 'issue' games etc., I would like to take just one more idea from life-cycle work. A branch of it is concerned with careers advice - helping people make decisions at critical points in their career by reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses. An appealing way of thinking about one's skills is through use and discussion of **Lifeskills Associates 'Transferable Skills'** card pack. Here the teacher can shuffle through the cards in the pack to identify the skills in which she is Very Competent,

Competent, Adequate for Task, or Undeveloped. Examples of the skills on the cards are:

Drawing out people
Showing appreciation of people
Organising people
Performing in public
Developing & adapting others' ideas
Designing learning situations etc.

It is possible to link discussion of these skills to sharing and trialling activities; to a concentration on the teacher language for using the skills; and to discussion of the teaching-learning principles the skills imply.

These brief suggestions just give an indication of the kinds of thoughts we can gain from looking at inservice training from the perspective of professional life-cycle research. Career change is inevitable, and it is important to try to understand it. Seeking to understand both my own and my teachers' changes is very much an unfinished task.

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Postscript: Some of Huberman's questions (**Teachers College Record** Vol. 91 No. 1 Fall 1989).

Think about your views at different stages in your career.

Look at the statements below. Which do you think represent your views?

NOW I think:

1a. There are pupils for whom one can do very little, no matter how hard one tries.
1b. All pupils are 'reachable', provided one invests the necessary time and energy.

2a. Ultimately, the results of well-designed innovations are worth the effort and complications involved in carrying them out.
2b. Often, innovations are well designed, but they involve too many complications and too much effort relative to the results obtained.

3a. Teaching is probably the most important activity in my life.
3b. Teaching is one of many important activities in my life.

AFTER 2 YEARS OF TEACHING, I THOUGHT:

1a.
1b.

2a.
2b.

3a.
3b.

AFTER 12 YEARS OF TEACHING, I THOUGHT OR WILL THINK:

1a.
1b.

2a.
2b.

3a.
3b.

! NEWS!

RELC Regional Seminar on Language Acquisition and the second/Foreign Language classroom. April 22-26 1991, Singapore. Details from RELC, 30 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 1025, Republic of Singapore.

TEACHER TRAINING GAMES SERIES
by Sara Walker

For a full rationale of the use of games in teacher training and development, as well as for Games 1 and 2 in the series, please see The Teacher Trainer, volume 4, number 3, page 19. More games in Sara Walker's series will appear in the next issue.

GAME 3

Balance and Variety - PAIR CARDS

Objective: to invite trainees or teachers to consider different elements that may contribute to balance and variety in a lesson plan.

Materials: Each of the words below should be written on a separate small card (all the cards should be the same size and shape). There should be one complete set of word cards for each group.

List of possible words for the pair cards, and the pairing (often opposites) I had in mind:

receptive/productive
competitive/cooperative
behaviouristic/cognitive
accuracy/fluency
controlled/free
learning/acquisition
stirring/settling
needs/wants
input/output
form/content
whole class/group work
structural/functional
teacher-centred/student centred
presentation/consolidation
oral practice/written practice
predictable outcome/unpredictable outcome
teacher talking time/student talking time

Method:

1. Ask trainees to form groups of 4.
2. Give each group a set of word cards.
3. Each group shuffles the word cards and lays them out face downwards on a table or the floor. The game is then played like Pelmanism (i.e. players turn cards over one at a time and try to remember where they are. Players have to form pairs of cards. Each time a pair is formed, the player keeps that pair, and the player with the most pairs at the end of the game is the winner).
4. However, unlike Pelmanism, this is not merely a memory game, since many different pairs can be formed. Each time a player turns up a possible pair of cards, s/he can try to justify a link between the two. If his/her connection is accepted by the other players in the group, s/he may keep the pair. If not, s/he must replace the two cards in their original positions on the table-floor.

Example:

Player 1 turns up "receptive" and "teacher centred". S/he might justify the pairing by saying that teacher-centred activities are usually receptive from the students' point of view. If this link is accepted by the group, s/he keeps the pair.

GAME 4

Found Your Own EFL Institute (mini-simulation)

Objective: to focus trainees' attention on how a good institute is, or could be, run. This game is best used at the end of a TTC when trainees are familiar with the workings of their training institute. It needs a full session (2-3 hours) if trainees are to produce a detailed scheme, but trainers can cut the list of categories for a shorter session.

Method:

1. Form groups of 6-8 trainees. Give them these instructions:

Situation: You and your colleagues have decided to found an ELT Institute of your own. Discuss each of the following points.

a) **Personnel:** nominate suitable candidates for the posts of President, Business Manager, Director of Studies, Coordinator(s), Teachers, miscellaneous others.
b) **Identity:** Choose a suitable name and symbol or logo for your school.
c) **Aims:** decide on your educational, business and methodological aims.
d) **Size:** decide on your initial size, maximum size, etc.
e) **Students:** what age-groups and types of students do you want to attract?
f) **Teachers:** how will you recruit, train and promote teachers?
g) **Location/Premises:** what kind of building do you want? How many classrooms? What kind of facilities and equipment?
h) **Support staff:** How many secretaries/administrative officers, etc., will you need? How will you recruit them?
i) **Financing:** How much capital will you need? How will you raise it? How will you allocate your resources (e.g. advertising, salaries, premises and equipment, etc.)
j) **Publicity:** How will you advertise your institute? Invent a suitable slogan and plan a commercial.

Feedback

Each group should be given 10-15 minutes to present its institute in plenary, complete with appropriate publicity.

Royal Society of Arts Certificate in TEFL* (RSA Cert. TEFL) trainees speak out

Speakers: Diana Healy
Maxwell Adams
Joy John
Alan Bumstead
Sue Ayhard
Valerie Benson

edited by Mario Rinvolucri

Setting: a student house on the campus of the University of Kent.

How the interview was set up

The 12 people on the Pilgrims RSA Cert. TEFL * Course in August 1989 were asked if they would like to record an interview from which excerpts would be published in The Teacher Trainer.

The interview was recorded by Mario, who the group had met for the first time that same day as a guest trainer on their course. He gave absolute guarantees that their tutors (who were also their assessors) would not have access to what they had said until after the course was over.

Mode of interviewing

Superficially the interview was non-directive. Mario asked no questions and refused to give guidance before the recording started on what he wanted to hear, beyond saying that he was after their thoughts and impressions of the four weeks course, on this the Tuesday of the final week. Of course no interview can be non-directive - the manner of the 'interviewer's' listening guides the speakers a great deal, and by this stage in the course some of the trainees were aware of Mario's writing work. The interview can be described as not being grossly, (journalistically) directive.

The editing

The most obvious theme to emerge from the discussion was that of tiredness, turmoil and stress. Everybody who spoke had this aspect of the course uppermost in their minds.

Perhaps the most interesting area of the discussion, from a trainer's viewpoint, were the direct and less direct statements about trainee dependence versus trainee independence. People suggested that dependence was induced by the weight of information to be taken on board, organisational changes sprung on the group by the tutors, the ideal of the'perfect lesson', the demands of the RSA's structure in terms of lesson planning etc.....

Here are some of the voices that spoke about dependence:

> "I had to take notes, I had to listen to it in class"

B. "Mmm ..... mmm, certainly, thinking about the amount of information, for me one of the frustrating things has been not having enough time to go away, read up on a new idea, consolidate it, think about it, how I can make it work for me? I've had to make notes, I've had to listen to it in class, I've then had to dash away and start thinking about a hundred and one things, preparing the lesson and that I have found to be really, really frustrating."

Tutor-imposed programme changes

B. "Having the programme changed in the middle of the course, first having it discussed with you in the second week to change the amount of time you're teaching and all of us saying "No, we like it the way it is, we don't want it changed" and that being accepted and then in the third week it was again changed without us being consulted, and we weren't told as a group, we were told individually and that created additional stress in a situation where we were already under stress."

The perfect lesson

A. "If you have an RSA lesson to prepare you really must put in a lot of hours to prepare that, it's not like preparing your daily lessons ....., you have to think, you want to be creative, you want to think up the right ideas, you get one book out, you get two books out, you look, you read, you put it back, you get more out ....."

D. "There was a terrible feeling that perfection had to be achieved. I think everybody had very negative feelings in the beginning, feeling "I've got to chop out this - that doesn't seem to be the way to do it, and I've got to chop out something else because that doesn't seem right either." But I think everybody went through a terribly negative feeling of "I really can't do this after all, I thought I could but now I think there's very little I'm able to do", I don't know if it was really necessary to feel so negative."

RSA lesson-planning demands

E. "I feel almost guilty that I'm preparing a lesson tomorrow where the students are going to have to talk a lot. I don't seem to have any particular aim for the lesson apart from to improve fluency, but the fact that I haven't got any other aim almost ... it just makes me feel guilty that I can't write much on my lesson plan and ... I don't know, er, I've been asked: "Oh what are your objectives?" and I say: "well, to get the students talking and to practice fluency, correction, etc.... self/peer correction ..." "But what else, Alan?" "Well, nothing really, sorry ..."

B. "I feel a bit the same about the one I'm planning on Thursday because it's going to be virtually a repeat of a lesson which I did

* The scheme Mario visited is now called the Cambridge/RSA Certificate TEFLA Scheme.

with the other group which I want to try with this group, which is something I enjoy doing, which is something I've discovered from the course that I like doing which is story-telling, which I'd never had the opportunity to do before, but, I feel guilty that I'm going to go in there and enjoy doing it ... (laughter).

For people on this RSA course a major step towards independence from the RSA frame and from the tutors, as they perceived them, was visiting ordinary language classes and seeing 'ordinary' teachers at work. These observation periods seem to offer a reassuring set of counter models to perceived RSA demands:

There's no right way to teach

B. "I found observation very reassuring after all the theory. It brought home to me that there's no right way to teach, that everybody's different and everybody has their own way of doing things, and having been striving for perfection in what we've been trying to do ... to just go into an ordinary class and see it being taught, has been ... reassuring."

You pick up lots of ideas

C. "I've found the observation very good - it gives you a real flavour of the real world, and you see real teachers working, making mistakes, on the whole doing a very good job and you pick up lots of ... I mean, at a very elementary level you pick up lots of ideas - you do get a very real sense of what it's like to be in a class with students in a real situation. I'd quite cheerfully, I think, - not really - I just say it - would be quite happy to stay for another fortnight if all I had to do was just look at other people teach, 'cos I think that's where ... that I found very very valuable and reassuring to see other people do this, and see what it really is like."

It's interesting to see how (human) people handle these problems

E. "I think the observation has been invaluable, whereas we're taught to work with the students in more than one particular way, a lot of styles, it's very interesting to compare the styles that we're taught to the styles that we actually see in classrooms and also the attitude of the students. It's helped us to realise that these are, you know, the different problems in an everyday class and it's interesting to see how human people, such as the teachers that we've been observing actually handle these problems. I think it's great to have the ..., it's not great ... it's OK to have the theory, but to actually watch it in practice is far more valuable."

Independence dawns, as it does in adolescence, with the realisation that you can both say 'no' and do 'no' to the relevant authorities. Here are some voices moving in that sort of direction:

We were actually discussing what we thought ...

C. "Perhaps it's a sign of the course's success that Valerie and I were talking today and actually discussing what we thought, how we thought vocabulary should be taught and say 'no, we wouldn't do it this way, whatever our tutors say - no, we wouldn't do it that way and this is why we wouldn't do it ....."

I want to control what I'm teaching my students

E. "I'd be very happy to stay here for another two weeks just doing teaching practice if I felt that I could control what I was teaching my students. I feel that the way the T.P. has been going we've had to work in a group, which is good for working with another person but the groups have since changed so that you're working with everybody and I've come to a position that I don't really know what anybody else is doing with them. And I feel as if I would like to spend more time with my students as I've built up some sort of rapport with them - I would like to spend more time with them - I would like to spend all day with them, you know, with TP."

Make it part of me or throw it away

C. "When I think back on the whole course it's been very fraught and I'm very tired but I think I've learnt a lot ... I've learnt an enormous ... (voice lost in hubbub of agreement) but I do need time to think about it, and take it away and make it part of me or throw it away, but it's been, it's been good. I wouldn't have given it up for anything, really."

A major theme that everybody in the group spoke about was tiredness, stress and emotional turmoil. All the speakers mentioned this and seemed to divide stress into what could not be avoided on this sort of intensive course and stress created by under-staffing and poor organisation. Here is a heart-felt voice speaking from what is perhaps a frequent RSA Prep fourth week state of mind:

The amooount of information .....

D. "Really, I feel this evening that I don't know what I'm thinking anymore because I've been here almost four weeks and, like you said at the beginning, we're all very tired. I find it very hard to sort it out because there are so many other things breaking in ... the stress and the tiredness and the ... just the amooount of information and the amount of experiences that we've gone through in the last few weeks ... I find it very hard just to be critical about it ... "

Will I pass, won't I pass?

C. "I was ready for the hard work, for the long hours. I really wasn't expecting the emo-

tional turmoil that I think I've lived in the middle of and been part of and I found that difficult to cope with at times. And I think that has sprung at the end of the day from what I think's been a ... some of the stress has been unnecessary, some if it's inevitable. I think you're right: if you're in a classroom teaching and being appraised that's stress-ful and there's no way round that, but you can reduce the stress. I just find it unbelievable that here I am nearly at the end of my fourth week and no one has actually ever said to me "you're likely to pass - you're likely to fail" ... I have no idea. Nobody has any idea and I don't actually think that's on, at the end of the day. Presumably the RSA or Pilgrims have got rules about that but I find that ... silly, frankly. I think that

adds to people's stress, because we're all here for a piece of paper; we're not doing this for nothing. I think you could reduce stress considerably if you actually did give people some idea of how they were progressing towards a piece of paper, as well as in other directions. That would be a very easy way to reduce a lot of stress. And I think Alan is right about confusion. I reckon there's been four timetable changes in the space of a week and two days (weak laughter) and I'm speechless about that. I don't want to say anything on tape about that. (loud laughter) I just find that unbelievable, actually unbelievable and I think that causes stress as well".

Singing stress away

A. "One night, on a Sunday night, when we were several of us, "oh dear, are we going to make it? are we any good? Are we going to get through?" and some one said: "Well go to Jim's sing-along. Well, it was wonderful ... and you just sing so you get rid of something, yes, Jim Wingate's sing-along, on a Sunday night. It just allowed, didn't allow anything more than just saying different words and think-ing different things, that's what it did and I enjoyed that. You can get that opportunity here, because there are sort of those kinds of things going on.

Mario writes:

Stress

How generalised is turmoil and stress on RSA Prep courses and other short, sharp introductions to EFL teaching? How much is it linked to the ambiguity of the trainees' relationship with the tutors who combine the role of giver, potential executioner and indirect employee. How confusing is all this to the trainees both consciously and at the other, deeper levels?

What can be done about it?

Trainee voices in a magazine aimed at trainers

One of the continuing absurdities of professional journals in areas like medicine, social work, teaching and architecture is that you can rarely read the voices of the users. How many articles does the British Medical Journal carry in which patients give their end of the story? To be fair, it does carry the occasional one, but mostly written by doctors who want to speak out as patients.

I hope that The Teacher Trainer will continue to offer space to trainees who feel the urge to speak about the training process and for whom the chance to speak publicly about this is a useful part of the training process itself. Maybe, gentle reader, you could help the rest of us to hear what your trainees have to say. They ain't dumb.

JOURNAL EXCHANGES

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

Aula de Ingles	(Spain)
IATEFL Newsletter	(UK)
English Language Teaching Journal	(UK)
Cross Currents	(Japan)
English Teachers' Journal	(Israel)
Modern English Teacher	(UK)
RELC Journal	(Singapore)
The Portuguese Newsletter	(Portugal)
Forum	(USA)
Practical English Teaching	(UK)
Focus on English	(India)
TESOL Newsletter	(USA)
PROSPECT	(Australia)

and is abstracted by 'Language Teaching', The British Education Index, the ERIC clearing house and Contents Pages in Education.

Process Options Series : Idea 16

INSEARCH
by Tim Murphey

A session in which we ask participants to remember a good teacher they have had is really asking them to do "insearch", to find the information they already have and to consciously reflect on it. Their own knowledge becomes a type of input to themselves as they use it in a new context. What they know is used to reflect on a present concern, e.g. "What kind of teacher do I wish to be?". Insearch is used as opposed to just being told "answers" and given "formulas" and we are lead to see what we already know. Any new information is then embedded in the known. Using insearch as a teaching tool makes any topic immensely more motivational because we are first accessing all the participants' experience concerning the topic and using that as the subject matter. As a result, they feel their experience, opinions, and feelings are respected and they are more open to consider those of others. The process is nothing new. Student-centred teachers have been doing it for centuries - though I suspect these teachers have been few in number.

I am presently using insearch a lot in a teachers' workshop on "interaction". To begin with, I ask the participants to brainstorm on the many ways they could get the kind of quality interaction that they want in their classes. Notice that brainstorming is an especially open form of insearch since participants don't necessarily have to have experienced something first hand (which limits "possibilities"), but may just have heard or read of it, or they may simply create possibilities from the myriad of neuron connections produced while letting their brains storm. Next, I ask them to list all the possible complaints from teachers and students about these kinds of interaction. Both of these brainstorm lists are first done in pairs or small groups and then collected and typed out on master lists.

Of course, when participants share their own insearched knowledge with each other, they are producing manifoldly more input than any one group leader could give. This insearched-input is also given in more of an equal encounter environment in which it is not necessarily received as "true because the authority said it"; and thus it can be questioned and tried out, not simply accepted. Group leaders also benefit from all this insearched input and may adjust their own perceptions. Another advantage is that this insearched-material (the lists) can be used as relevant input in subsequent classes. It thus saves work for the leader/trainer/teacher and doesn't lead to frustrating "guesswork" as to what participants know already and need to know at a given

point. One merely works with what is already there, and uses that as the principal material to take the group further. In Neuro-Linguistic Programming or NLP terms, it is building rapport through mirroring and respecting what is already there, and only then leading in new directions.

Finally, insearch is for me a major ingredient in any well-motivated quality-interaction because it ecologically uses all the resources present: the participants and all they know and have experienced. The "Tessa Loop" (see ref. 1) in doing this with teachers-in-training is clear: I hope they make their students the main component in any language course and not the "language", the textbook, nor the syllabus. Rivers said it well, "As language teachers we are the most fortunate of teachers - all subjects are ours. Whatever the children want to communicate about, whatever they want to read about, is our subject matter" (see ref. 2). I contend that most of her "whatever" is already inside each person and that it is easily tapped with insearch strategies. In other words: "Learning is finding out what you already know. Doing is demonstrating that you know it. Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you. You are all learners, doers, teachers." Richard Bach. (see ref. 3)

I feel a great deal of what we do in teacher training can be more efficiently handled in insearch sessions due to the personal accessing of information which can then be amended, adapted, and/or exorcized. Just providing input without such accessing may miss

the boat of relevant interaction which is so powerfully capable of inciting learning/change.

Still as I ponder here, I doubt if anyone could teach totally through "insearch", especially when participants have apparently "learned" so much through an input mode. And it very well could be that certain input will be at times necessary in order to create a frame for insearch.

John Morgan, in responding to a rough draft of this piece, wrote:

> ... that pure insearch is insufficient is evidenced by the simple fact that we all retain problems, experience blocks and frustrations, are aware of intellectual/experiential inadequacies. Sometimes this must be due to lack of information: if I do not know your telephone number I cannot ring you up, and no amount of pure insearch will find that number. There is a need here for factual "input" from outside the person. (How that "input" is to be achieved is quite another matter ...)

Most of the above reflection took place after the first week of a two week Pilgrims train-the trainers course during the summer of 1989. The participants were rather annoyed near the end of the first week because they felt they weren't receiving enough input - the facilitators were sensitive enough to respond to this expressed need and provided more straight input sessions which contrasted greatly with their earlier "insearch" sessions. Alas, other participants felt less enthusiastic about the input sessions because they felt their feelings and knowledge were not being used. Still, they too needed the input sessions to realize what the "process" was all about the first week. *

The value of insearch may be best described in the following belief: The most dynamic material for encouraging change/learning in any teaching situation is the participants, their feelings and knowledge, and their interaction with each other. In this view, the job of the facilitator becomes that of creating interactive situations that provoke valuable insearch which becomes comprehensible input for all concerned. When the facilitator sees a need for input, it can then be given within the framework of the knowledge of the participants. (Notice that this corresponds to Carrel and Eisterhold's schema theory as well. (see ref. 4)

* N.B. All of this, of course, is my subjective impression of what went on and it could very well be that different participants saw things quite differently and that the facilitators may have had very different goals - I have often been surprised by participants telling me things they had learned from my sessions that I had no idea of. But that is the power and magic in insearch.

My working hippopotamus (hypothesis) at the moment would appear to be: 1) first access the participants "known" and then 2) use that as further input in different ways, and 3) encircle new information in the known for maximum relevancy and depth of processing.

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1. Woodward, T. (1988). Loop Input Pilgrims Publications.

2. Rivers, Wilga (1976) Speaking in Many Tongues: Essays in Foreign-Language Teaching Rowley, Mass: Newbury House Publishers.

3. Bach, Richard (1987) Illusions. Pan Books.

4. Carrel, P.L. & Eisterhold, J.C. 1983 Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy TESOL Quarterly 17:4 553-573.

P.S. Recently I have tried a new "Tessa Loop" with insearch in several workshops. I go in and simply write "Insearch" on the board and give them a few minutes to brainstorm individually on what it is. Thus they are doing insearch on what insearch might be. They then compare in pairs and this leads into a class discussion. In one group they basically framed the whole idea themselves and I contributed only nodding agreement. The idea, when reflected upon, teaches itself.

P.P.S. I would be interested in hearing reactions to the above.

(Letters to Tim will be forwarded to his new address. Ed.)

WHO READS 'THE TEACHER TRAINER'

Here is a sample list of subscribers:

The British Council, Spring Gardens, London.
Instituto Anglo - Mexicano, Mexico City.
The School of Education, Leeds.
Davies's School of English, London.
The English Language Teaching Office, Khartoum.
The Language Centre, Muscat, Oman.
Institut fur Deutsche Sprache, Freiburg.
The Library, St. Clare's, Oxford.
Lecturers in Aston University and Lanzhou University.
Trainers in Ouagadougou, Ljubljana, Sarawak, Goiania-Goias and Al-Jubail.
Bookshops, Holland, Belgium.
The Director General, Bell Educational Trust.

People Who Train People

Usually this column presents interviews with people who train people to do other things than teach foreign languages. For a change this time there is an article reprinted with permission from The British Medical Journal (2/12/89 Vol. 299. No.6712). The article, a personal view from John Collier, presents one view of what it is like to be trained in a medical school. As usual in this column readers are invited to draw their own parallels or differences between fields.

Medical education as abuse

John Collier

Medicine - Art of restoring and preserving health, the physician's art.

Education - To draw out from, bring out, develop from a latent condition.

Abuse - To destroy or pervert the meaning of.

Student - One engaged in or addicted to study ... to be eager or diligent.

In 1982 Henry Silver wrote in JAMA about his experiences at Denver medical school. He described seeing keen "eager beaver" freshmen who could not wait to start on the arduous lifelong task of being a doctor and also noted the few months that it took for them to become cynical, dejected, frightened, and depressed. He was a paediatrician and he thought of similar changes that he had seen in children placed in foster homes. He realised that if he had seen such changes in young children he would be concerned that something terrible had been done to them. He knew about child abuse and he wondered whether some students might be abused after entering the foster home of the medical school.

He remembered the 1960s when he had worked with Henry Kempe on the battered baby syndrome and he remembered the incredulity that had met their assertions about abusing families. Most (middle class) doctors agreed that battering was to be expected in the homes of drunks, mental defectives, and the ignorant. "But surely the good doctors were mistaken when they thought it took place in nice middle class professional families." Even in America it was considered a God given right to bring up your children with firmness and love. "So long as you love your child it doesn't matter what you do." Punishment was sometimes necessary for the child's own good.

A similar difficulty exists in medical schools where educational abuse is common, but the teachers deny its possibility and the students keep quiet from fear of further punishment. Any suggestion that the medical school might be abusing its students is flatly denied and derided. "Prove it" is the usual cry from the scientists and experts.

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In an ideal educational system there would be clear aims to a course with requisite skills identified. Learning requires practice and feedback so that skills can be improved to the desired level. Without continuous feedback you soon lose track of what it is you are trying to learn and can never achieve the desired level of competence. Yet the reality is different. Most medical school faculties think that they offer comprehensive feedback and yet the students think that they don't. Add to this the sensation of continuous examination that seems to be a feature of modern training and the whole process of education seems to fall flat on its face. Students approach the final two years of training worn out by nonstop testing and with an overt wish to pass exams rather than learn and understand the subjects offered.

Unfortunately, much of our learning at medical school does not adhere to any conventional educational models. Education at its best requires active participation and question-ing, with a development of the individual's potential. Goals and aims are set and the student approaches each test or exam with a positive desire to find areas of strength and weakness and to improve on deficiencies.

... a professor used to prod and squeeze our earlobes until we got the answer right.

Not so in medicine where the instruction is didactic and uninviting of criticism. The models in current use seem to be the "sponge", soaking up and regurgitating large volumes of information, "the watch me," which requires a sense of mimicry, and the "deep end" approach, which tests bravery and risk taking.

The problem with learning large volumes of factual information is that it leaves you feeling like a badly programmed computer or tape recorder, knowing that the machine can do a better job than you. One doctor described the process of medical education as "like having your brains scooped out and then squeezed back inside your head." Is it possible that some of these teaching methods might actually hamper the processes of learning and education?

Medical seminars and tutorials often follow the pattern of teaching described by John Rowan, a humanistic psychologist. Here the teacher plays a game of "I'm going to ask you a question to which I already know the answer." In this game the student has to give the answer that the teacher has already decided

is right and there is little or no encouragement to explore or discuss the topic. The teacher can quickly identify several different types of students - the bright ones who enjoy the game, the dull ones who are turned off by the game, the helpful ones who do their best, and the disruptive and the lazy ones who know how to play but won't join in. It is not surprising that it is the bright helpful students who receive the highest marks for playing the game well. Yet there is no encouragement to discuss or explore the subject critically. If the doctor says it's right then it must be right.

I think that it is tragic for brilliant, intelligent, well motivated, kind, and caring young students to enter medical school only to be faced with an archaic traditional hierarchy that demands absolute compliance from its junior members. With its rigid structure, organisation, and internal rules medicine denies many of the emotional experiences of its students in order to foster a professional detachment and maintain a power structure that is more suited to the armed forces and the English public school. It is not difficult to imagine medicine as a boarding school. After a few years in the kindergarten the students proceed to the main house in the big building, working hard, fetching and carrying, doing the menial tasks as instructed by their superiors. Many are bullied by the older boys who consider these fags to be no more than servants. The house is kept in order by the consultant prefects and professional head boys, with the school fees handled by some distant well meaning board of governors. Survival in the boarding school depends on acceptance of the rules and a desire for a good end of term report or reference. Caning and fisticuffs are frowned on since the threat of a poor end of term report is usually sufficient motivation for most fags to comply and keep quiet.

But if this monolith is the structure to which we subject ourselves and our children, what exactly is the abuse that takes place?

... medical education is like having your brains scooped out and then squeezed back inside your head.

All sorts of people and personalities enter medical school, yet certain characteristics are more common in those with ambitions for careers in surgery and internal medicine and are even more apparent in teaching hospitals. These are a tough minded, insensitive approach to people and their feelings; identification with powerful groups in society; mistrust of minority groups - for example, immigrants or homosexuals - and a traditional view of the role of women.

These characteristics correspond to the authoritarian personality described in the 1940s by Adorno who was investigating fascist and antisemitic attitudes in the United States. It includes an unquestioning acceptance of authority;of rejection of a tenderness and displays of emotion; and favouring of harsh punish-ments for drink and drug abusers and women seeking termination of unwanted pregnancies.

There is one final method of traditional medical education that I have been unable to find in the major textbooks. Bullying, intimidation, and humiliation are essential in main-taining all hierarchies, but I still can't find the evidence that they are any good for producing doctors. I first came across these attitudes in the fourth year and to my own great shame I did nothing about them. A (male) surgeon was teaching us, both men and women. One of the women in the group expressed a desire to be a surgeon. (In the late 1970s surgery was a bastion of male chauvinism.) The consultant didn't like women, perhaps feeling a little threatened and frightened by them. He chose to humiliate her by getting her name wrong and he did so every week for two months. He wasn't just a bully but a racist and chauvinist too. We just tittered and let him do this for we had been well trained in not disagreeing with the most disagreeable of people. To her credit she opted for a career in surgery. As far as I know he is still teaching surgery to mixed groups of students and no one has ever challenged him. I presume the medical school faculty condones this sort of education. Why else would they let it continue?

A professor used to prod and squeeze our earlobes until we got the answer right and he had a reputation for terrifying students. And then we were threatened with a punch on the nose if we got the answer wrong yet again, banned from theatres, or sent off the ward. The antics of these aging prima donnas did noth-ing to educate, but they did show us how to survive and be a modern doctor provided that we could smile without weeping, flinching or running away. After all, abused children often grow up to abuse their own children. It's all they know so they do what comes naturally.

Does abuse exist or is it all a figment of my imagination? This decade has seen an increased awareness about child physical and sexual abuse and an equally raised awareness about the difficulties facing students, house officers, and junior doctors. Physical and sexual abuse in medical schools is probably uncommon, but psychological abuse is probably far commoner than any of us like to think, being regularly denied by both victim and abuser. Yet somehow we need to try and understand the despondency of junior staff and students and the high morbidity from drink, drugs and suicide that exist in the medical profession.

Perhaps I am imagining all of this and need to stop making a fuss. Perhaps I just need to stop worrying. After all, students are adults, they do not need to be spoon fed. Medicine is a tough course and stress is an integral part of a busy clinical life. You must marry medicine if you are to approach it honestly and seriously. Perhaps it is best that the weak should fall by the wayside. It was good enough for my father so why don't those who don't like it get out? It is unlikely that medical school will welcome feedback of the performance of their professors and teachers but perhaps it should still be offered. If only we could be honest and admit that when a student fails an examination it is more a reflection of our failings as educators and mentors than of the student's abilities.

John Collier is a lecturer in psychiatry who has recently emigrated to Canada.

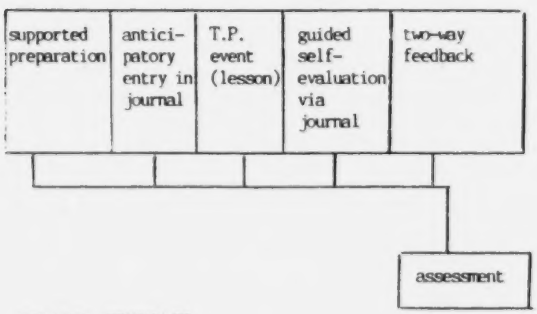
Observation and Feedback

GETTING 'MILEAGE' OUT OF DELAYED FEEDBACK
by Ray Parker

For a little over two years now, teaching practice on all types and levels of course at our TESOL Centre has had the benefit of a delayed feedback procedure.

Richard Denman's article in Teacher Trainer Vol. 3 No. 3 testifies to the effectiveness of such a procedure in another institution and has prompted me to describe some of the details of our procedure, in particular the use of a teaching practice journal. The procedure has helped, we believe, to make teaching practice a constructive experience of long-term value.

The pattern of teaching practice evaluation is summarised in the following diagram:



DELAYED FEEDBACK

As a young teacher I was in the habit of going once a week to the cinema with my class. Over and above being a pleasant shared social outing, the films provided the whole class with a common experience on which to base later discussion work. I quickly learned, however, that the slightest discussion of the film in pub or cafe that evening would be desultory, superficial and dominated by the 'fast reacters' of whom I certainly wasn't one!

The simple device of banning discussion of the film till the next day led to discussions that were lively, full of unexpected insights and the property of the whole class.

The lessons were obvious. The more stimulating and intense the experience, the longer people needed to come to terms with it, formulate evaluations and compose shareable opinions.

Few experiences can be quite so intense, for the person who almost inevitably perceives him/herself as the principal participant, as a lesson under observation. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the same mechanism of delayed feedback should work with teachers under observation as works with classes of language students.

GUIDED POST-PARATION

Post-paration (i.e. reflection after a teaching event has taken place, as opposed to preparation) is such a valuable concept that I dearly wish I could attribute it. Caleb Gattegno, I know used to talk about it but perhaps someone better informed will be able to tell us who invented the term.

Whoever invented the term, I feel sure that a short period of constructive post-paration is worth hours of preparation in terms of long-term teacher development.

The problem we all seem to share in feedback, to some extent at least, is difficulty in seeing the wood for the trees. Not surprising, perhaps, since we are one of the trees ourselves!

THE T.P. JOURNAL

One step towards a solution to this problem has been the institution at the TESOL Centre of the Teaching Practice Journal.

It works like this. After a teaching practice event of any kind (e.g. micro, peer, team or individual teaching) the observing tutor declines to give any feedback. The exception to the rule is, of course, the odd reassuring comment if the tutor sees that the teacher appears to be unduly depressed - a very rare event in any case and seldom if ever the teacher's 'fault'.

The teacher must then complete the journal which, unlike other documents left over from the lesson - handouts, lesson plan, OHT's - will involve the teacher in evaluating the event in detail and as a whole.

A feedback session is then arranged on the following day, by which time, even the slowest writer has normally had enough time to reflect on and record their observations. The feedback really does become a two-way process with the teacher frequently providing insights and information that the tutor had not or could not have noticed. Only occasionally is the reverse true and typically, the bulk of feedback time is spent in productive agreement.

Attention is drawn to cataloguing, evaluating and accounting for the good points of the lesson as much as the weaker aspects. The teacher is required to consider the effects of the lesson on the learners and finally the lesson is evaluated in the context of the series of lessons of which it is a part rather than as a one-off event.

'SPIN-OFF' FROM THE SYSTEM

We have found the journal system particularly useful on short courses for new-comers to teaching or to TESOL. Courses such as the Royal Society of Arts or Trinity College Certificate courses are typically 4 weeks long and with the best will in the world there is little that can be done about the quantity of teaching practice. What the journal system offers is the opportunity to improve on the quality of the teaching practice experience. Looking beyond the course it hopefully lays the foundations for a lifetime's habit of post-paration.

In addition, the journal system has given greater face validity to an element of teaching practice which may be perceived very differently by the two sides of the training partnership. That is, unobserved teaching practice. From the tutor's point of view it is essential that (at least) some of the teaching practice time even on a short course should take that extra step towards reality by taking place without the 'phantom scribbler' at the back of the room. From the teacher's point of view, however, this may seem like a lost opportunity for yet more feedback. The journal goes at least part of the way to convincing the teacher that she/he is ultimately responsible for the evaluation of each teaching event and provides the opportunity to practise the necessary skills.

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING PRACTICE

Finally, the journal has added a valuable fresh dimension to the contentious issue of the assessment of teaching practice. In our case a lesson is only assessed after the feedback session. Indeed, the quality of insight demonstrated by the teacher during feedback normally influences the final grade considerably.

After the fairly rigorous self-assessment of the journal, the teacher can reasonably be expected to have formed a view as to the overall worth of the whole lesson. It is not then odd or unexpected that the tutor will invite the teacher to grade the lesson. The grade chosen may well coincide with the grade the tutor has in mind. More often the teacher's evaluation is a little lower than the tutor's - only very occasionally is it higher. Whatever the case, however, if the estimates differ significantly this is simply a signal for further negotiation, explanation and justification from both participants.

ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE JOURNAL

After the final teaching practice event and feedback session the journal is handed in for assessment. The "score" from this assessment is added to the "scores" for the teaching practice events themselves and thus an evaluation of the teacher's insights becomes a significant component in the overall Teaching Practice grade awarded to the teacher. We feel quite strongly, now, that it is improper to 'grade' teachers purely on the quality of their ephemeral performances in the classroom, however skillfully and humanely such grading may be done. There should, then, be a substantial element in such a grading which gives credit for a teacher's own insights into what has happened.

We have noted, of course, a wide variation in the quality and, indeed, the quantity of entries in the journals. But this is no more than we should expect. Just as learners present us with a wide range of learning styles and expectations, teachers too, quite properly, provide a variety of responses to the T.P. Journal discipline.

Nevertheless, we do have some expectations and, indeed, without them it would be remarkably difficult to assess the journals.

Very briefly the aspects of commentary that we seek most are:-

(i) evidence of progression - i.e. evidence of the analytical process leading to an enhancement either of performance, or in affective areas such as teacher confidence, personal satisfaction with the lesson etc.

(ii) evidence of 'balanced observation' - a very difficult area for all teachers but we do hope for a growing ability to identify and account for the successful moments and procedures in a lesson at least as much as for the less than successful ones.

(iii) evidence of acceptance of personal responsibility, where appropriate.

(iv) the ability to take a learner-centred view of the event.

CONCLUSION

Observing tutors are paid, quite literally, for being "wise after the event". They do not, however, have a monopoly on such wisdom though teachers in the T.P. spotlight may find it relatively difficult to articulate their impressions instantaneously without time for reflection and rehearsal. The ultimate purposes of the T.P. Journal, then, are to redress the balance of assessment in the present and to build up constructively analytical skills for the future.

Ray Parker, TESOL Centre, Sheffield City Polytechnic

Sample Journal Layout

PART ONE - TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE LESSON

1. THE LESSON PLAN

Are you reasonably satisfied with and confident about your lesson plan?

_____

If not, which area(s) is/are giving you most concern?

_____

_____

GETTING 'MILEAGE' OUT OF DELAYED FEEDBACK

by Ray Parker

_____

_____

Please try, below, to identify the reasons for any concern you have mentioned above.

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART TWO - TO BE COMPLETED AFTER THE LESSON

1. THE LESSON PLAN

With the benefit of hindsight would you propose any changes to the lesson plan?

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE OF LESSON _____

LEVEL OF CLASS _____

TYPE OF LESSON PEER TEACHING/TEAM TEACHING/ PAIR TEACHING/INDIVIDUAL TEACHING/ UNOBSERVED T.P.

Were any of the concerns you noted in Part One realised?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Can you draw any general conclusions from these remarks?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. PERSONAL QUALITIES

Did you satisfactorily establish rapport in this lesson?

_____

If you have any worries in this area please try to analyse the problem. The following checklist may help you:

nervousness
anticipation of learners' level
voice
factors beyond your control - e.g. weather/new students/ equipment failures etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. ACTUAL EXECUTION OF THE LESSON

Did the lesson go better than/worse than/about the same as you had anticipated?

_____

_____

Which parts were you particularly pleased with?

_____

_____

_____

Why, precisely?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which parts were you unhappy about?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Why?

What steps do you propose to take to remedy the above?

4. FOCUSSING ON THE LEARNERS

Please list below all the language or language skills that you feel the students had at the end of the lesson that they did not have at the beginning. Your list may include lexis, phonology, structures, functions, any improvements in any of the four skills, awareness of appropriacy etc.

Make a comment assessing the extent to which the improvements noted above apply to all or only part of the class.

To what extent do you feel that the learners were aware of the points you have made in the two sections above?

5. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

If this was not your first lesson in this series -

a) to what extent have strengths noted in previous lessons been reinforced?

b) to what extent have weaknesses identified in previous lessons been remedied?

6. SUMMARY

In note form, list the points you have to put right for the next time.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEND SOMETHING IN TO "THE TEACHER TRAINER"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing and 46 characters a line. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

The Pre-service/initial education of Teachers in Finland

Aarno Ronka, Thelma Wiik and Seppo Tella, teacher trainers at the University of Helsinki, have been corresponding with me on the big differences between the training of modern language teachers in Finland and other countries. In Britain, for example, a modern languages' student will finish their languages degree and then stay on for a one year postgraduate course which aims to train them to be a teacher of their studied language. In Finland the model is not 3 years plus one or 5 years plus one. There is an integrated model:

"At the end of their second year of modern language studies students can apply to join the teacher education component. They have an interview and aptitude test and if successful they join the component which takes place alongside their other academic subjects. The teacher education component consists of 40 study weeks in all. It is comprised of general education (12 weeks), methodology of language teaching (9 weeks), teaching practice (18 weeks) and optional studies (i.e. video, CALL, suggestopedia etc. 1 week).

The students usually start their educational studies at the beginning of their 3rd academic year. They continue their language studies in the respective language departments at the same time. Of course when they are doing their practice teaching they have to slow down on their other University studies. Gradua-tion takes about six years or even more."

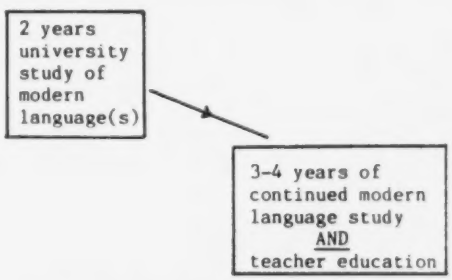
So, instead of the British 3 years + 1 year system the Finnish system is 2 years (straight Modern Languages) + 4 mixed years (Modern Languages and Teacher Education).

"The educational studies component is thus staggered over 3 or 4 years. In the first of the "mixed" years there are 12 weeks of general education (a study of the literature and lectures). The optional studies week comes in the second of the "mixed" years as does methodology of language teaching which consists of lectures, seminars and workshops as well as a study of methodology literature. In this year too comes the "basic training". This builds from micro-teaching and small group practice to lesson observation and practice lessons as well as lectures, seminars and workshops. Teacher trainees who have no teaching experience can look after a real class in an ordinary school for one month. This gives them a chance to experiment with different ideas. They usually assume all responsibility for the class(es) they teach, including evaluation and possible mark-giving. Senior teachers in the schools do help if appropriate.

During the final training stage, which lasts some three months, the teacher trainees give 14 - 18 practice lessons, observe classes and continue to attend tutorials, seminars, and different courses at the Department of Teacher Education. Most foreign lanuage teachers will teach two modern languages in schools so they also have to train in two subjects. (Exotic combinations, such as English and home economics, are allowed, although they have not been very popular so far).

After the final stage, the teacher trainees will get a Certificate of Teacher Education, with marks for teacher training (grades 1 - 5, five being excellent), general education (grades 1 - 3, three standing for excellent), and foreign language methodology (grades 1 - 3). The Certificate of Teacher Education is rather important when the new teachers apply for their first teaching posts. The teacher trainees are rather conscious of this (regrettable) fact, which causes some stress during the final stage."

Thus the usual model for modern language teacher education in Finland is:



"It is also possible in Finland to apply for teacher education courses after taking a university degree. This is called a "separate teacher education system". It lasts one year, and is similar to the system described above in terms of study weeks and its content. Only a minority of students become teachers this way, however.

A few comments from the teacher trainers' viewpoint:

* With the first model, the mixed system, what looks good and applicable on paper may turn out to be difficult to carry out in practice. So far, the experience of the system has shown that there is not enough coordination between the Language Departments and the Department of Education. This results in a situation where the student is expected to be in two places at the same time. Most of the courses and seminars at the Language Departments require compulsory attendance; at the Department of Teacher Education, attendance in some courses can be replaced by exminations. A principle of lenience has been increasingly adopted at both ends: a certain number of lessons can be

missed or replaced, if the priority of the other requires it. Despite these lenient and understanding arrangements there is still a certain amount of stress and frustration among the teacher trainees, unfortunately. The schedule for the whole course of teacher education seems to be rather tight, although there have been slight attempts to alleviate the work load.

* There are also problems of coordination, mostly about timetables but also about the contents of training. There is a danger of too much overlap in what is taught, which of course is frustrating and demotivating to both trainees and trainers. Some aspects might also be somewhat neglected on the assumption that the others will deal with them. A lot of exchange of information and mutual agreements are needed to sort out these problems, and we are glad to say there has been some success within the Faculty of Education on this.

* Because the teacher trainees start practice teaching before finishing their language studies, their language proficiency is sometimes insufficient for teaching purposes at senior senior secondary school level in particular. This problem becomes less grave as they make progress in their respective language studies.

* A definite advantage of the system is the fact that students know what is awaiting them after their professional studies: i.e., giving lessons, alongside their academic language studies will give them a fairly realistic picture of their future profession. In our opinion, the objective of combining theory with practice has been fairly well achieved in our teacher education system. (The teacher trainees used to criticise the system for focusing too much on general education, but this has changed radically during the past few years).

* The selection system ensures the fact that only people with characteristics suitable for the teaching profession enter teaching education.

* Our students seem to be quite well-motivated and determined to become teachers. Students have to apply for teacher education at an early stage, and this seems to have a positive impact on their attitudes towards teacher education and teaching as a career. In their modern language studies they can also increasingly focus on things that will help them as teachers.

Comments from a reader

"Starting your teacher training in subject year 2 at University means that you have to make career decisions very early. Also from the selection committee's point of view, they have to select me at the end of year two. I might be very different at the end of year five!

Editor

If you work/learn/train on another very different system why don't you drop us a line describing it? It's good to know what other systems exist.

PREPARING SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS FOR THE 21st CENTURY: WHAT I WOULD EMPHASIZE

by Dr F Gomes de Matos

1. Applying the principle of loving one's linguistic neighbour (for example, by acknowledging, respecting, and promoting learner's linguistic and pedagogical rights).

2. Learning to amuse and to entertain learners. (Exploring the fun element in language learning and language teaching).

3. Enhancing the ecological relevance* or validity of language learning: capitalizing on local values.

4. Contributing to international harmony and understanding by integrating peace in language education, especially in communicative activities in the classroom.

5. Becoming crossculturally-minded and interculturally literate.

6. Learning to be effective, creative explainers of the structures and uses of languages (taught).

7. Reading about successful teacher trainers and teachers and thus enriching one's professional maturity.

8. Networking (with colleagues in one's community, or in one's country) to share productive ideas, classroom experiences and successful results. (Included: interacting with mother tongue teaching colleagues).

9. Making the most of educational (esp. video) technology (taking courses, attending workshops).

10. Being interdisciplinarily oriented (for instance, when evaluating, selecting and creating materials relying on insights and principles from several sciences and arts, rather than from only one or two sources).

11. Contributing to the growth and respectability of the language teaching profession (locally, nationally, internationally).

12. Improving one's fluency as a non-native user of the language (maximizing self-instruction).

Note

* of ECOLOGICAL, I mean reflecting the interaction of the human beings involved (teachers, learners, materials designers etc.) and the local culture i.e. a systematic framework that integrates principles from several disciplines and capitalises on aspects of local culture such as legends, customs, ethnic groups etc.

BOOK REVIEW

Doff, Adrian TEACH ENGLISH. A TRAINING COURSE FOR TEACHERS. Teacher's Workbook and Trainer's Handbook.

Published by Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Reviewed by Ruth Wajnryb.

TEACH ENGLISH is a teacher training course for teachers of English to speakers of other languages. It can be used as a pre-service programme or an in-service one for teachers who entered the field with no training or relevant background experience. It is especially designed to meetthe needs of teachers whose first language is not English, who are teaching EFL, and who are working in a professional context of large, inflexible classes, few resources, set textbooks, limited control over course content and choice of material, and limited time for lesson preparation or professional development.

There are two books in the set: a Teacher's Workbook and a Trainer's Handbook. These have developed from material used by the British Council in their teacher training projects in Egypt and certainly the material has a familiar British/RSA/EFL feel about it. In all, the books are designed to provide a total teacher training course, to be used as the set textbook, with excellent supplementary reading suggestions provided. The course contains 24 units, each of which focusses on a different area of the TESOL training curriculum and provides about 4 hours of teacher training. Some of these are: presenting vocabulary, asking questions, using visual aids, using the blackboard, eliciting, correcting errors, planning a lesson, teaching reading, organising pairwork and groupwork, planning a week's teaching.

The course has a modular structure, so that while the units appear in a numbered sequence, they are actually quite self-contained and can be used independently of each other. Consequently, the book can be followed as a complete cover-to cover course (although the set sequence does not have an obvious rationale) or can be "dipped into" and used flexibly as the need demands. This feature of flexible use is a great plus. It means that the trainer can choose units and can sequence input in a manner perhaps more appropriate to the local TESOL context. (There are some suggestions in the Trainer's Handbook as to how adaptations for local needs might be made; there are also helpful cross-references at the beginning of each unit in the Trainer's Handbook so provided to allow trainers to create their own input sequence and recycle materials to their own requirements e.g. in Unit 1 (on presenting vocabulary) in the Trainer's Handbook, we are told that there are further references to vocabulary in the units on reading, visual aids and eliciting; this information helps the trainer to "dip" into the resource in accordance with individual and local needs.

The Trainer's Handbook itself assumes little training experience. A step-by-step instruction manual such as TEACH ENGLISH is an excellent resource for beginning trainers, giving them both the materials and guidelines needed to help make the important transition from experienced teachers to confident trainers. Naturally, there is scope for the materials to be supplemented or adapted to local needs and few trainers would stop at the materials provided in TEACH ENGLISH. But the course does provide an anchor or a point of departure for the inexperienced trainer.

Three key features of the training methodology are demonstrations, discussions and small group activities. The Trainer's Handbook almost semi-scripts the demonstrations (many of which are inappropriate to multi-lingual settings, having a large translation component as well as an unfortunate tendency towards display questions); there is close and very guided assistance on leading a discussion as well as pointers for setting up, monitoring and rounding off group work. This assistance will be appreciated by trainers new to the field.

Each of the 24 units contains five or six activities which in my view can be wrapped around or used to determine the core parts of a typical training session. These follow a predictable and logical pattern: a lead-in activity that serves as a sensitiser or consciousness raiser; then there are a few activities that lead the trainee deeper into the issues, providing examples, practice and opportunity to do simple workshop tasks in pairs or small groups and to discuss opinions and options. These tasks are meant to develop insight into the main areas of concern in TESOL. Towards the end of the unit there is a section on lesson planning where all the strands of the unit are drawn together for the practical purpose of planning a cohesive lesson. "This is intended to act as a link between the training session and classroom teaching and to encourage teachers to try out techniques in their own classes" (Trainer's Handbook, p.4).

Following the lesson-planning task, there is the self-evaluation section by means of which the author builds a component of reflection the course. Having tried out the lesson, the trainee is then asked to evaluate their own efforts, to consider amendments based on the experience of trying it out, and generally to analyse and reflect on their own teaching. "The purpose ... is to develop teachers' own self-awareness, so that they can improve their own teaching independently of the training sessions, encourage (them) to think of their lessons from the learners' point of view and shift the focus of attention from teaching to learning" (Trainers' Handbook, p.4). The self-reflection component is an important feature of the coursebook showing that despite the very

practical classroom-based training element of the course, the author is, as well, concerned with the teacher's on-going professional development (or "education"). There are good sugge-stions made as to how the self-evaluation sheets might best be used within the training course, ranging from pure self-reflection to external assessment (Trainer's Handbook, p.5-6).

To make the most use of the coursebook, the trainees would best have on-going access to a class or better yet, their own class, in order to try out what they are learning. The course, in fact, assumes that the trainees are teaching while training. Although suggestions are given for trainees without classes - peer teaching or written lesson plans for future use - it is clear that these are considered a poor alternative to the real thing.

There are two other features of the Teacher's book worthy of mention. One is the "background texts" which contain deeper food for thought than is provided elsewhere (more "education" than "training"). There are four of these, appearing every fifth unit, on the topics of reading, structures and functions, language learning theories and communicative language learning. The content is interesting, easy to digest, and thought-provoking, but I find it mysterious that these particular four aspects of "theory" are treated and not others (why, for example, the focus on reading, and not any of the other 3 skills?) and that they are sequenced and spaced in a way that seems quite arbitrary. The other feature of interest is the summaries at the back of the workbook where the salient points of each unit are summarised for easy reference.

It is perhaps an irony that the training style is probably more in line with contemporary thinking in teacher education than the espoused language teaching methodology is with current theories of language acquisition. A key and very contemporary feature of the course is found in the workshop tasks. The book doesn't tell trainees what to think; it encourages an active style of training, with maximum participation from the trainees who are often involved in a discovery learning process where they experience some of what they will be having their own students experience. For example, to "discover" what it's like reading a text with unfamiliar lexis, a workshop task (in Unit 5 on teaching reading) provides a text with nonsense words inserted so that the "guessing" that learners have to do is simulated by the trainees. Not a revolutionary idea. But a neat, workable and effective one.

Perhaps the most appealing aspect of the course from the point of view of training pre-service teachers, is its very hands-on, chalkface quality. In this era of sophisticated research into second language acquisition, neuro-linguistic programming, action research, where every language teacher is applied linguist, curriculum resource person and counsellor rolled into one, we sometimes overlook the importance of systematically training trainees in the actual "craft" of the classroom: how to organize the blackboard so that it serves as an effective prop and does not disrupt the lesson; how to give instructions lucidly and succinctly; how to determine valid aims for a lesson; how to support verbal material with non-verbal aids; how to organize a group activity; how to best demonstrate a stress pattern in a sentence. Such things are basic to language teaching and integral to providing a firm foundation from which teachers can subsequently progress in their own professional self-development.

There are those who believe that teacher training and teacher education are separate and important phases of a process or continuum of teacher development; that, first, a teacher trainee has to learn the basics and be able to survive in the classroom and only then is such a teacher able to step back from their teaching and evaluate it in terms of the broader issues and aspects of the discipline. Within the framework of such a paradigm, TEACH ENGLISH provides the first training step. It offers the first taste of TESOL and does so with sufficient honesty and effectiveness, without over-burdening the trainee with more than they are at present willing to deal with. One could say that the background reading texts as well as the references for further reading are signposts bridging the way into the next phase of professional development.

To summarise: TEACH ENGLISH is a good, introductory, pre-service text, most effective when it can be assumed that trainees have access to a class of learners on whom they can try out the ideas they are being exposed to and reflect on their own teaching performance. It is easy to follow; it presents complex ideas in access-ible, well laid out, visually pleasing ways. It is sufficiently traditional to be far from trail-blazing yet contemporary enough not to feel like something out of the sixties. It is practical and applied and very chalkface-ish. There is a sense that decision-making in the classroom - even at the most basic and very beginning stages - is an informed and intelligent exercise with certain logical and predictable consequences. It encourages pre-service teachers to begin to take responsibility for the decisions they make in the classroom. The key feature of self-reflection, built into the course through the regular self-evaluation sheets, is instrumental in heightening trainee awareness. The course aims to sensitise trainees to key procedural issues in English language teaching and , significantly, it does this less through direct exposition than through providing experiential opportunities for exposure, analysis, discussion, clarification, reflection and self-scrutiny.

In reviewing this book as a resource for teacher training, it is important to understand the context in which the book developed, a context in which the vast majority of English language teachers in the world are non-native speakers with limited English language proficiency, working in traditional and difficult educational circumstances. In his Introduction to the Trainer's Handbook, Adrian Doff refers to the two separate worlds of teacher education: in the one world we have trainers working with small manageable classes, with ade-

BOOK REVIEW

quate resources, with the facilities and means that have allowed them to become the avant-garde in methodology in their field. The world is that of large classes, set syllabuses, traditional methodology, fixed, exam-determined learning. What Adrian Doff has tried to do with TEACH ENGLISH is to bridge the gap between these two worlds in an attempt to bring the benefits and advantages of the one world to address some of the needs and realities of the other. He is to be commended for his goal as much for the sensitive processes by which he sets out to achieve it.

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First published, in slightly different form, in TEA NEWS (Australia) Summer, 1989 and INTERCHANGE (N.S.W., Australia) No. 13, March, 1989.

BOOK REVIEW COUNTER COMMENT

by Mario Rinvolucri - Pilgrims

As far as I know Adrian Doff's TEACH ENGLISH is the first example of an internationally published teacher training coursebook. For those of us who feel that coursebook thinking is a serious virus of the mind and the heart, the publication of TEACH ENGLISH is a disaster. The book is bound to be successful and influential. It is a God send to administrators who want to set up TT programmes and don't know how. CUP gives them a neat, ready-made solution.

Somebody had to transfer stultifying, anti-creative routinising coursebook thinking from the area of language teaching into that of teacher-training. CUP have done this and encouraged the trend towards neat, repetitive, off-the shelf training packages, which are the stock-in-trade of much industrial training.

It is sad that an excellent, well-made book as essentially bad as this one should have come from UK ELT's most methodologically innovative publisher.

PRESS RELEASE FOR ARELS-FELCO WITHDRAWAL

The following schools have withdrawn from ARELS-FELCO (the Association of Recognised English Language Schools): The schools of the Bell Educational Trust, the Swan Schools of English, Pilgrims, International House (London), Merrion House, and those of the Eurocentres Foundation. All have in the past been active members of ARELS-FELCO because they considered it a way of contributing to the development of the EFL profession and its professional standards.

Over the last couple of years - severally and jointly - they have come to the reluctant conclusion that ARELS-FELCO membership is not an effective way of making this contribution to the profession. The greater part of ARELS-FELCO resources are devoted to its brochure and promotional activities and less than 20% to educational or professional improvement.

All the schools leaving have a strong commitment to professional, educational, and management standards: they are much involved in teacher training. They have decided that they can support and promote this more effectively in other ways than through ARELS-FELCO - and will organise workshops and training activities here and abroad in cooperation with professional associations, like IATEFL for example. They have in the past all contributed generously to ARELS-FELCO not just the financial support of their subscriptions, but also the time and expertise of themselves and their staff. They will continue the same financial and professional commitment to promoting quality in EFL, but are confident that they will be able to use the resources more practically than in recent years.

It is also the view of the schools that the time is now ripe for new initiatives in professional development. There is a need for cross-sectoral links with British EFL, with universities, state colleges, broadcasting, publishers and examination authorities in order to promote the quality image on a broad front. There is a need, too, to internationalise this effort and forge links with our partners in the European Community and beyond.

Although the schools plan to form an association for cooperation in a number of areas, it is not their intention to form a trade association in competition with ARELS-FELCO. ARELS-FELCO's present policy clearly represents the wishes of a majority of its members and the schools leaving wish it future success.

Alan Maley, H.A. Swan, James Dixey, Tony Duff, Martin Roundell Greene, Frank Heyworth.

TRAINER BACKGROUND

Language and gender in the EFL classroom
by Jenny Pugsley

What is sexist language and stereotyping?

How often have you asked your students to find three other students in class who love or can't stand ... men/girls/people who ...: anything wrong? The terminology is taken from a well-known coursebook. An otherwise excellent book on study skills comments as follows: "The student is encouraged to ask questions before he starts reading a passage ... The lecturettes may either be delivered by the tutor himself or ... " Another popular course-book's one-page section on comparisons includes seven illustrations of, and four references to, men/boys ... but find the lady, if you can.

What is current, accepted English usage?

One of the dilemmas in drawing up a language syllabus is deciding when to teach everyday English as spoken and understood by millions of British citizens, and when to impose a model of correctness with reference to grammar, choice of vocabulary, register and pronunciation. Whether you veer towards the former or the latter, you will still need continually to make choices. Trawl the opinions of a dozen educated and articulate native speaker friends on a range of items and compare their various tenets with those expressed in a selection of contemporary grammars. I am here thinking of language study for EFL rather than the ESL (English as a Second Language) learner, given that in the case of the latter there is clearly a responsibility to take some account of the legitimate variety of English that that learner brings to the classroom, and the particular English-speaking community they return to at the end of the day.

Language and change

On the face of it, there would appear to be sufficient consensus of opinion on what is standard British English to give any teacher plenty of "ground" to cover before sweating over a split infinitive. But what happens when standard British English is found wanting? What does the teacher do when it has been demonstrated that words and collocations are not understood in the way that they are claimed to be? Research by De Stefano, Kuhner and Pipinsky (1978) showed that so-called inclusive terms like man, men and mankind evoked male rather than female images in people's minds when they were asked to match pictures to statements including these terms. How do you take issue with what remains unsaid, as in the case of the non-existent female examples? Or take an example such as "Man can do several things which the animal cannot do ... Eventually his vital interests are not only life, food, access to females ..." (Spender, 1982 quoting Fromm). Is this even genuinely inclusive in intention, let alone effect?

The fact that language does change has, happily, been documented for those who look to the grammarians and applied linguistics for the final seal of approval. In Quirk et al (1985, p.343) we read: "The pronoun they is commonly used as a third person singular pronoun that is neutral between masculine and feminine. It is a convenient means of avoiding the dilemma of whether to use the he or she ... What is clear is that the feminist movement in language has made many language users aware of the problems of sexual bias which were overlooked by earlier generations." In An A-Z of English Grammar and Usage (1987), Leech notes: "In the past, English has used the male pronoun to refer to both sexes ... But nowadays many people (especially women) dislike this ... They prefer (inter alia) to use the Plural they for the Singular (in speech) ... There is no "correct" choice ..." I am grateful to Jane Sunderland for bringing the above example to my attention: her own MA dissertation on this topic is listed in the bibliography.

Finding examples

A perusal of a large number of widely-used EFL coursebooks and reference books - with a few recent, notable exceptions - will reveal some interesting statistics. Ask your teachers to check for themselves. Take any ten consecutive pages, for example, of three or four coursebooks and count up instances of all or some of the following:

a) number of references to, and illustrations of, women - full stop! - compared to number of references to men;

b) number of examples of use of the masculine pronoun after a neutral pronoun or noun (e.g. Every teacher should monitor his own use of English.);

c) number of references to women and to men by physical characteristics;

d) number of references to women and to men by their relationship with a partner or member of the family;

e) number of references to women and to men by profession or occupation;

f) number of references to women in the stereotypical female occupations - nurse, secretary, teacher, cleaner, "assistant", etc.;

g) number of references to women as having stereotypical characteristics - being unin-

Language and gender in the EFL classroom
by Jenny Pugsley

telligent, unsystematic, easily upset, bad tempered in the home, "nagging", "bitchy", etc.

Talansky (1986) did a survey of some of the above examples across twelve textbooks used widely in English teaching in Italy and came up with useful findings. Women were still badly under-represented in the materials surveyed, and where they did make an appearance, it was almost always in one of the stereotyped roles. Such materials are at best unprofessional, at worst quite offensive.

What can teachers do?

Adapting materials

Initially, a teacher may feel that aware -ness of sexist language and stereotyping as described above is little more than a further constraint in the preparation of syllabus and materials. The use (or avoidance) of certain coursebooks may well be dictated by the institution rather than left to the individual teacher's preference. Alterations to whole pages or chapters makes for an interesting exercise but is probably too time - and - paper consuming for the teacher to tackle on an indiv - idual basis: several teachers of a similar persuasion could, of course, undertake some re-writing on a cooperative basis. But there are more rewarding ways of approaching the issue of gender "loaded" text.

Contrastive analysis

One means of tapping a student's potential interest in this area is to contrast English usage with that of their mother-tongue and see how far their own terminology is "gender-loaded" - e.g. with such terms as chairman, manpower, and their equivalents in the foreign language. One could also compare their own systems of inflection and choice of vocabulary to indicate sex of speaker and listener.

Avoidance strategies

How would you re-write the following to avoid masculine terminology?

- Everyone should review his life-plan at least once a month.
- Primitive man relied on his dreams to predict the future.
- Menstrual pain accounts for large loss of manhours.

Exploring vocabulary

Ask students to list (or track down in dictionary) derogatory/flattering words to apply to women and to men. Ask them to consider the contexts of such terms as:

hero - heroine

bachelor - spinster

man and wife (as in marriage ceremony): are these genuine opposites? Also note the order in which they appear. Is left, or syntactic first, dominant?

Is there a form of the following words that could be applied to the opposite sex? With the same connotations?

a nag	a villain
a bitch	a lad ("a bit of a -")
bossy	masterful
loose (morally)	thug
waitress	waiter

Can we find alternatives to the following to avoid terminology relating to gender: manpower, workmanlike, sportsmanlike, mankind, forefathers, over-/undermanned, etc.

What do we think of the following so-called feminine forms, some of which include the gratuitious modifier lady or woman: actress, authoress, sculptress, woman doctor, lady barrister, usherette. Is the sex emphasized at the expense of the (implied) professional competence?

What can trainers do?

Language awareness and skills development

A study of the above examples is clearly relevant to the development of reading and listening skills, and would seem to be an essential component of any serious teacher training programme. Similar exercises could be done to identify racist terms and expressions, and terms that are derogatory about the elderly, for example.

Trainees could be given a range of authentic texts, such as newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, instructional material, academic texts (e.g. teacher training!). They could be required to analyse them for anaphoric and cataphoric reference, including nouns and pronouns that are distinctly masculine in form. They could be given a text referring to man/mankind/humanity etc. and be asked to replace all the so-called inclusive masculine forms pronouns and possessives with feminine forms: would it work? would other changes be necessary? what would the effect be on the reader/listener? A simple diary-keeping exercise of one's own experiences is the most convincing evidence. When I recently asked a management trainer whether he ever had applications from women for his courses, he replied: "Oh yes, we had a young girl of 28 only last month ..."

Teachers are often anxious that the teaching of their, for example, after a singular noun or pronoun may be ruled as incorrect by an examiner. Despite the pronouncements of Quirk et al and Leech as quoted above, there is no doubt that not all official examiners

take the same view on this. Teachers may wish to sensitise their trainees to the implications of the unvarying he/him without prejudicing their students' chances in examinations: alternatives can often be found, e.g. every student should ... becoming ... all students should ...: no-one will be penalised for their poor spelling ... becoming ... none of you will be penalised for your ...; the changes can be syntactic as well as simple word-for-word replacements.

Class management

The above is not without relevance to the issue of class management. Do your teachers treat their female and male students equally? Do both sexes get equal talking time? Are questions and interruptions accepted from both sexes? Do you use the same language with both sexes? Are the girls/women told to stop chattering or gossiping, and the boys/men told to stop talking? Is your threshold of tolerance of errors the same for both sexes? Do you let the women get away with more errors, because you want to encourage them, or fewer errors, because you have higher expectations of their ability in the first place? (This is not to suggest that levels of tolerance should be the same for all students: there may be sound reasons for differentiating between them, but not on grounds of sex alone.)

In other educational fields there has been research to show that students often behave in the way that they believe teachers wish them to behave: teachers who treat all girls as giggly and flirtatious, and all boys as competitive and headstrong, may well inhibit their pupils from showing other qualities. (See Barnes, 1976.)

Two can play at this game

Women are not the only ones to suffer from loaded language. There are men who do not want to be described as "one of the boys" and who would like to see a more flexible image of the average male: one who can admit to fear, ignorance, physical weakness, lack of confidence, for example, and show emotion without being labelled as "effeminate", a term that is equally derogatory to both sexes. They feel equally discriminated against when the words thug (see earlier section on vocabulary), brute, criminal, thief, murderer, convict, are invariably assumed to refer to men!

Against Sexism in EFL Materials: the group

The Women in TEFL Conference is an informal organisation of some seventy women working in TEFL: teaching, training, writing, publishing, administration. It has met six times since its inception in 1986. The Materials sub-group was formed in 1987. Our ultimate objective is to put to the Publishers' Association suggested guidelines that would assist their member organisations to emphasize the need for non-sexist language and stereotyping in EFL publications. (Most publishers do have in-house guidelines of some kind but these vary considerably in terms of editorial policy.)

In order to make the case, we have put together guidelines for teachers on how to identify and avoid this kind of stereotyping, and these, together with a questionnaire, were sent to some 650 English teaching centres and examination boards in Britain and overseas. Over 350 questionnaires have been returned, mostly indicating a strong interest in the subject, and putting forward useful examples of sexist language and stereotyping.

Conclusion

Looking at language and gender in materials and class management should not be a fat-reducing exercise that takes the richness and variety from the text, oral or written. On the contrary, it is a process that should add to the context imaginative and realistic dimensions that may previously have been absent. Some of you may well have seen the guidelines and questionnaire already. If you have not, further details and copies can be obtained from me, Jenny Pugsley, at 25 Hillbrow, Richmond Hill, Surrey TW10 6BH, England.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers.

I have received a large number of titles in the 'Language Education' series, edited by Frances Christie and originally commissioned by Deakin University, Australia for use in its own School of Education, Open Campus, MA in Education course. All the titles are influenced by Halliday's functional grammar and show applications of systemic linguistic theory to educational theory. Some of the books are very, very slim for their price. All are published by O.U.P. (1989), and all have the same 8 page forward.

Factual Writing: exploring and challenging social reality by J.R. Martin. Using snippets from real conversations and texts by children, the author shows the differences between, for example, recounts, reports and explanations and between girl's and boy's writing. Next, adult texts challenging and defending the status quo are analysed in order to break down the idea that 'factual writing' is factual. The different skills required in school and in the outside world are thus contrasted to show how the education process could be improved.

Learning the mother tongue by Clare Painter. 49 pages of main text. If you don't have (access to) children or never had time to analyse your own child's early language, this study of Hal, the author's eldest son, may interest.

Talking and thinking: the patterns of behaviour by David Butt. The entire book consists of a conversation between a student of educational theory and a student of linguistics. That's 94 pages of dialogue that has been'orga -nised' to make it coherent to an outsider and thus made very dense. The main areas covered are: the Saussurean theory of signs, an application of it to descriptions of thinking in particular communities and an analysis of, for example, the talk of five year olds to discuss "point of view".

Spoken and written language by M.A.K. Halliday. A book that aims to restore some status to speech in societies where written language is considered superior. A look at speech in infancy, the development of writing through pictures and ideograms, and a comparison of speech and writing leads to the conclusion that the two impose different grids on experience and thus serve different goals.

Language education by Frances Christie. Only 45 pages long but interesting. Using an analysis of two classroom transcripts, the author points out how skilled a child has to be to recognise and conduct the various patterns of discourse in which different kinds of knowledge, information and ideas are expressed.

Another set of books (1990) was received from Oxford University Press, this time in the 'Resource books for teachers' series edited by Alan Maley. All adopt the recipe format with the usual notes on the level of student, timing of the activity and so on.

Literature by Alan Duff and Alan Maley gives 37 ideas, (including literacy texts) for use with young adult learners and as a jumping off point for interactive language activities. It is thus not a book about studying literature. A slightly uneasy text division into 'starting points', 'general approaches', 'developing ideas' and 'over to you' but an interesting appendix of ten generative principles underlying the recipes in the book (e.g. reconstruction, reduction, replacement).(OUP)

Grammar dictation by Ruth Wajnryb. Grammar dictation gives 60 examples (complete with texts) of one technique, sometimes known as 'dictogloss' where learners are asked to reconstruct as much as possible of a dictated text. The book will appeal to the teacher who likes dictogloss, has a definite theme or structure in mind and who wants a lesson plan, 'NOW' (OUP)

Getting students to talk by Aleksandra Golebiowska (1990) Prentice Hall. This book originally published in Poland has been translated and then edited and adapted for a more international audience. Highly recommended to any teacher who wants to start from scratch and consider how classroom routines, information gap, role plays, simulations, discussions, groups, role cards, layouts of the classroom, rules, materials and teacher role, can be adjusted to encourage students to talk. There are 30 pages of functional phrases at the back to help the teacher with self access or with target language preparation in mind.

Understanding Research in Second Language Learning (A teacher's guide to statistics and research design) by J.D. Brown (1988) CUP. American EFL publications such as the TESOL Quarterly are full of statistics, charts, tables and graphs when compared to EFL publications from many other countries. This book written from the University of Hawaii aims to make everyday teachers "research literate", i.e. help them to understand and critically evaluate quantitative, empirical research on language learning.

Supervision and counselling by Gaie Houston (1990) ISBN 0 95 103 2321. Another in the excellent paperback red book series. Written originally for counsellors and therapists but very relevant to trainers who need to "monitor, encourage, inform and inspire themselves, with the help of another qualified person". Sections on style and method, rapport, ethics, practics, getting moving, staying lively. Short, accessible, amusing.

Supervision: Human Perspectives by T.J. Sergiovanni and R.J. Starratt McGraw Hill (1983) ISBN 0 07 056 312 8. Expensive, hardback from the U.S.A. with close print. A thorough treatment of the main issues in educa-

tional supervision, written in academic style with many reading references to Weber, Maslow, Bloom etc.

Teaching and Learning English Worldwide Edited by J. Britton, R. Shafer, K. Watson. Multilingual matters (1990) ISBN 1 85359 064 9. Contains historical studies of the teaching of English in 13 different countries where English is the mother tongue or second language. The authors of the different chapters concentrate on the place of English in the social and political context of the society.

Humanism in Language Teaching by Earl Stevick. OUP (1990) ISBN 0 19 437161 1. Aims to examine how language teachers have talked about approaches and techniques labelled "humanistic", to look at the assumptions behind the talk, to provide information on the theory and practice of Counselling Learning and Gattegno's Science of Education and finally to look at the humanism in methods not commonly labelled humanistic. More academic in style than some other Stevick books.

ESL: A handbook for teachers and administrators in International Schools Edited by E. Murphy. Miltilingual Matters (1990) ISBN 1 85359 090 8. Information on setting up programmes for low English proficient children including qualifications, hiring, setting up ESL departments, useful books and materials.

Testing for Language Teachers by A. Hughes. CUP (1989). ISBN 0 521 27260 2. By accepting the mistrust many language teachers have of tests and testers and by offering a problem-solving approach to test writing the author has produced an unusually readable text on a complex subject.

Classroom testing by J.B. Heaton. Longman (1990). Another in this useful series of slim, jargon-free, practical books for ordinary teachers. Deals with reasons for testing, test-ing the four skills and continuous assessment.

The Cross-linguistic study of sentence processing Edited by B. MacWhinney and E. Bates. CUP (1990). H.back. ISBN - 521 26196 1. Beyond the basics of psycholinguistics, this collection of reports on studies in a wide range of languages uses the competition model to explain the ways in which human beings process sentences.

Learning strategies in second language acquisition by J.M. O'Malley and A.U. Chamot. CUP (1990). ISBN 0 521 35837 X. A review of the literature on learning strategies, presentation of models for learner strategy training and a little bit (3 pages) on teacher training for learning strategy instruction.

Video in action: Recipes for using video in language teaching by S. Stempleski and B. Tomalin. Prentice Hall (1990) ISBN 0 13 945619 6. Over one hundred ideas for using video in language classes. Cross referenced according to level, purpose and type of material. Useful practical hints on the logistics of the equipment, maintenance, protection and copyright.

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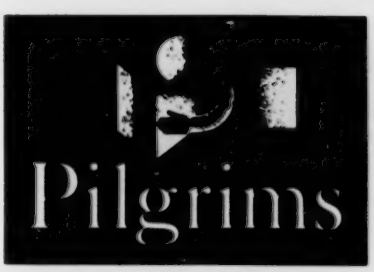

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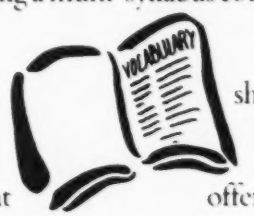

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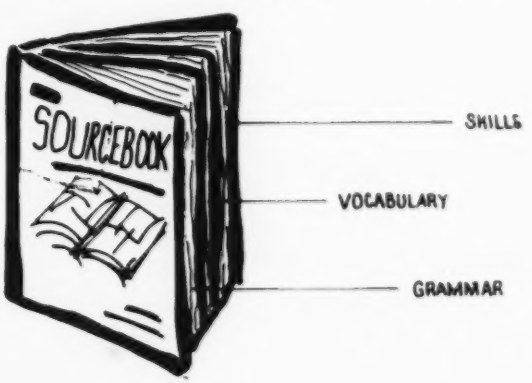

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For more information about The Sourcebook contact:
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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume five Number two

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Process options, Observation and feedback, Current research, Meet a colleague, Author's corner, Trainer background and Publications received.

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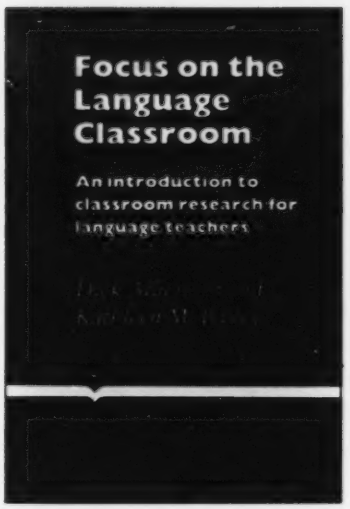

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

VOLUME FIVE NUMBER TWO SUMMER 1991

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EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the summer issue of Volume Five. Our lead article in this issue comes from Dee Uprichard of the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education. Dee writes about the way her materials production courses for teachers have evolved as the participant groups have changed over the years from Saudi Arabian male primary school teachers, to include Tibetan, Japanese, Guinean, Togolese and many other teachers.

Seth Lindstromberg offers us an interest-ing entrance test for a one month, pre-service teacher training course. The article includes test examples, rationale and a comment from another trainer who has used the test.

The games series continues this time with a board game designed by Sara Walker to get teachers talking about students, teachers, lan-guage, lesson planning and culture.

The Teacher Trainer regularly runs series on different themes. Not all themes appear in each issue. In this issue we welcome back:

Process Options This column offers ideas on how to elicit or share information within teacher training groups. Les Embleton tells us about the 'Nominal Group Technique' that works as a systematic kind of brain-storming.

Observation and Feedback Bill Johnston writes from the perspective of a director of studies whose duty it is to set up an in-service observation programme. His proposed solutions to the situation are tactful and diplomatic involving a questionnaire and plenty of negotiation.

Current Research A relatively new column this one - it gives space to trainers who are under-taking academic or personal research and who want to let others know what they are up to. Peter Preece informs us about his research into the rate of instruction in foreign language vocabulary learning.

Meet a Colleague This time our colleague is Valeria Shadrova who lives and works in Leningrad.

Trainer Background This column aims to help trainers to keep in touch with ideas in teaching, training and learning so that they can stay "one step ahead", relevant and useful to their course participants. Bill Reed shares with us his expertise on training teachers to teach "Business English".

Author's Corner Penny Ur, the author of 'Discussions that work', 'Teaching listening comprehension' and 'Grammar practice activities' talks about how she writes her books.

As well as our main articles and the established series we always try to provide space for both known and new contributers. In the known (to our readers) category this time come:

Mario Rinvolucri, who has written a letter, not for you the trainer, but for initial or pre-service trainees. If you know some, why not deliver the letter to them!

Ruth Wajnryb returns with some thoughts on the problems that face a beginner teacher trainer.

Greg Acker, ex-Togo, jazz musician, motor-bike teacher and EFL trainer returns with a jazz chant for use in a teacher training session.

Thanks are due as always to our cartoonists for bringing the pages alive and for Lesley Farr, our paste-up expert - for the same reason.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

THE CHANGING FACES OF MATERIALS PRODUCTION ON THE DIPLOMA IN TEACHING STUDIES

by Dee Uprichard

Materials Production is the one course I have had the opportunity to repeat yearly, since I arrived at the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education in 1985. I have, therefore, been able to develop and expand my origin-al programme. As a result of this, the course is quite different now.

The course I first planned was for 14 Saudi-Arabian male primary school teachers who were here on a two-year in-service training course. Their first year was an access course and in their second year, having attained an intermediate level of English, they moved onto the Diploma in Teaching Studies. The Materials Production course is one component of this.

These teachers had learned English using a mainly structural-functional syllabus so they were used to segmenting the English language into teachable chunks. The course book for teaching English in Saudi-Arabian schools was "Saudi-Arabian Schools English". Being quite dependent on this book, they were not used to devising their own teaching aids to support their lessons and make them more interesting. It was, therefore, my aim in the Materials Production course to help them to do this in conjunction with their course book as well as relating closely to the Methodology and Micro-Teaching components of the Diploma in Teaching Studies. They would be returning to Saudi-Arabia to teach small classes of beginner-inter-mediate level boys. Money was forthcoming for books, equipment and the latest technology.

During the first year of the Materials Production course, sessions were spent making flashcards for a magazine picture library, discussing ways of using the O.H.P. and producing transparancies with elaborate over-lays, time was given to the use of audio and video tapes in the classroom; techniques for enlarging pictures using the epidiascope were popular. Reading laboratories were seen as a desirable aid to children's learning, particularly at the initial reading stages. Board drawing sessions were monopolised by practice in giving Saudi male faces various characteristics from different sized moustaches to different styles of wearing the "gutra". Pairwork and group work activities were considered to be valuable as a teaching/learning style.

The focus of the course began to change after the arrival of 4 Zairean lecturers who joined us at the beginning of 1986. They were going to return home to lecturing large classes where shortages of basic equipment were common. It was necessary to adapt the course so that the needs of these people were also met.

It became important to include techniques which did not rely on any technological hardware. For example, enlarging pictures was extended from the O.H.P. and epidiascope to using home-made pantographs and the "squares" method. The latter is time consuming - scaling up both the picture to be enlarged with pencilled squares and the paper onto which it is to be transferred with squares double or treble the size. However, it is a simple technique. Board sessions included not only drawing but also ways it could be used as a focal point for texts, such as gap-filling exercises, sequencing tasks and class story building. Prediction skills were encouraged using sheets of newspaper to mask parts of the texts. All this to get round the lack of a photocopier.

In 1986/87 there were 22 students on the course - 12 Saudi teachers and 20 Guinean (Guinea Conakry) teachers and lecturers, one of whom was female. The course was adapted in several ways to accommodate the Guineans. The course book being used to teach English in Guinea was "English for French Speaking Africa". Thus, the material we produced related to this too, where possible. For example, charts and maps in the book were transformed into informa-tion gap activities by splitting the information given on one chart/map equally between 2 charts/maps and then copying them onto large sheets of paper or onto the board. Using an information gap activity with a large class (100 pupils) would be possible by labelling the class rows alternately "A" and "B". "A"s are instructed to copy the chart on the left hand side of the board and "B"s - the chart on the right. The pupils are then ready to begin the activity with those in the neighbouring rows.

Working in this way may involve teachers of large classes in adapting their methods of classroom management. The Guineans were return-ing to a situation of lecturing and teaching large classes in classrooms where moving the furniture was disruptive and time consuming, therefore ideas for pairwork and group work activities had to be managed differently. However, it is not always practical to try to implement a sudden change from the teacher centred style of teaching/learning in the home country when the situation militates against this. The Guineans all agreed that these ideas would have to be introduced gradually.

The students which the Guineans were to teach were in many cases, older, more experienced and more academically inclined then those of the Saudi teachers, but as each of their teaching situations in Guinea was different, it was evident that the target for the materials was not one cohesive group, as one might imagine the case to be with Saudi secondary school boys. The actual content of the materials, therefore, needed careful re-consid-eration. For it now not only had to include culturally suitable materials aimed at Saudi teenage boys but also had to include materials to interest adults in another continent, some of whom were highly sophisticated. I contacted African and Asian book suppliers in London and wrote to Oxfam for visuals. I found the "New

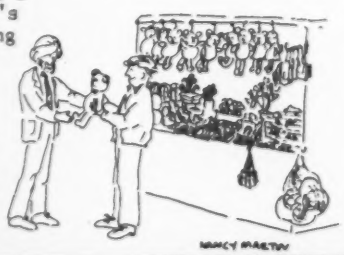
Internationalist" calendar an invaluable source of suitable pictures and texts of international interest which could be adapted for classroom use.

Many of the Guineans were themselves lecturers in Linguistics, with an awareness of the theoretical issues underpinning language learning, which seemed almost in direct opposition to the Saudis' practical knowledge of the way one might approach teaching English to an absolute beginner.

In 1987/88 the participants on the course were 10 Guinean secondary school teachers including 1 woman, and 3 Togolese, one of whom was an English Language Inspector. The course developed further towards addressing the restrictions imposed by large classes and a dearth of books, equipment and facilities. These African teachers, being orientated towards the skills of reading and writing, were interested in collecting suitable texts to supplement their coursebook ("English for French Speaking Africa"). We discussed the materials they brought to class identifying the main focus of each and working upon the specific exercise types possible, which were largely dictated by the texts. An example of an information transfer and gap filling exercise, adapted from the "New Internationalist" calendar 1987, can be found at the end of this article.

The focus of the course had changed from one where the end product had been mainly the appropriate use of a structure or function supported by suitable materials to add interest and variety, towards one in which developing appropriate linguistic skills and strategies for learning English was of equal value. As the appropriate exercise types and the ensuing skills and strategies were dictated by the materials, the materials had become the starting point and the finishing point.

The academic year 1988/89 brought further changes to the course demography with 13 participants, 4 of whom were women. There were no Saudis. The group consisted of 6 teachers from Guinea Conakry, 2 from Guinea-Bissau, a Burkinabé, a Tibetan, an Indian, a Japanese and a Malaysian. So there were 7 home country situations to accommodate in the course with the age range spanning infant to middle age, the ability range from beginner to advanced and class size from small to large. These teachers contributed a great deal to the course in terms of ideas, suggestions and ingenuity. They never seemed to miss an opportunity of collecting materials with a view to adapting them for teaching and they made full use of a number of quite unlikely sources. The Sunday market in Bognor Regis became a materials producer's "paradise" providing many an article, picture, toy or game for transformation into a teaching aid to be added to the "Materials



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Please support "The Teacher Trainer"! It's the only publication existing solely as a forum for the modern language teacher trainer.

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.....

THE CHANGING FACES OF MATERIALS PRODUCTION ON THE DIPLOMA IN TEACHING STUDIES cont'd

Production"box and transported to another part of the globe.

1989/90 manifested a multi-lingual but almost mono-continental, though definitely not mono-cultural, group of 22 participants 5 of whom were female, consisting of 19 Africans from 7 different countries, 1 Sri Lankan, 1 Qatari and 1 from Madagascar.

As most of these teachers were returning to classes of between 60 and 120 students, it was of paramount importance to discuss all materials, tasks and activities with this in mind, which meant focussing closely on class-room management. One idea for class management which was enthusiastically received was this:- divide a class of 100 students into 10 labelled equal groups. Organise the seating positions so that in every lesson a different 10 pupils sits at the front of the class. This group is the "special" group for that lesson - it has access to the board for class activities and to materials for any group work which the teacher wishes to introduce. In this way all the pupils have a turn at the front of the class where they can benefit from the teacher's close monitoring; there is minimum disruption for board work which includes pupil-centred activities and for group work; the teacher is able to introduce a variety of group work activities gradually with a view to building up a stock of tasks and activities which might eventually involve the whole class.

Looking back over the past 6 years, it seems that one of the most important factors to bear in mind in planning a "Materials Production" course is the degree to which it can realistically fulfil the requirements of the course participants. I have found that negotiating the syllabus at the beginning is a useful way of making a start, if the trainees are experienced and sophisticated enough to do this, for it not only assumes they are familiar with the terminology of syllabus design but also en-tails considerations of relevant materials, tasks and activities as well as explanations of the aims, methods and classroom management styles in the home teaching situations. And even before this so-called initial stage, it is vital to have access to any course books or other materials from the countries of origin - this is usually easier said than done!

Materials Production is sometimes under-valued, being of a mainly non-academic nature. However, I consider it to be one of the most important areas in teaching and teacher-train-ing today. It is a constantly changing, challenging and inspiring field - but materials are time-consuming to produce. I think it needs to be given a higher profile (and there-fore perhaps higher status) than it seems to have at present - unless, of course, we are all happy to return to chalk and talk.

WEST SUSSEX INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Reading Exercise Types ..... Extract

Women Farmers

Read the following extract from a letter and fill in the spaces using the information on the charts in Appendix A which accompany it.

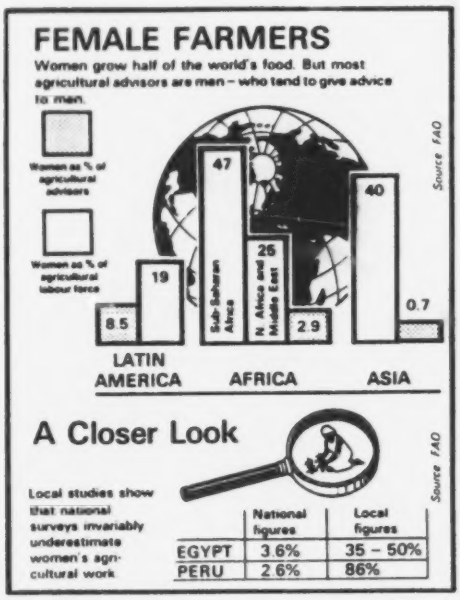
Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to your request for infor-mation about female farmers, I enclose the results of my findings listed below:

A. Female Farmers in the world

Women grow ..... of the world's food. But most agricultural advisers are men - who tend to give advice to men. If we take the example of Latin America, Africa and Asia, we see that in Latin America, there are more than (1) ..... as many women agricultural workers as there are women advisers. In Africa and the Middle East, the situation is also dramatic. Whereas (2) .....% of all agricultural workers are women, only 2.9% are advisers. this problem is even more extreme in Asia where, although (3) .....% of agricultural workers are women only (4) .....% are agri-cultural advisers.

Appendix A



	National figures	Local figures
EGYPT	3.6%	35 – 50%
PERU	2.6%	86%

AN ENTRANCE TEST FOR A ONE MONTH INTENSIVE PRE-SERVICE TESOL TRAINING COURSE

by Seth Lindstromberg, Hilderstone College / Pilgrims

One of my jobs is overseeing Pilgrims' programme of four-week intensive teacher training courses leading to award of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA)/Cambridge Certificate in TEFL/Adults. Because Pilgrims runs only two or three courses a year, it is not cost-effective to maintain a full-time specialized screening and advisory service that includes regular face-to-face interviewing of applicants.

When I first took over as head of the programme, I experimented with telephone interviews, but concluded that I was not only unable to discover what I wanted to but also unable significantly to prepare candidates for the experience to come. As a result, I decided to substitute a 'language awareness task sheet' for the interview. The results in the first year were encouraging. The failure rate of our trainees under this screening system was well below the national as well as our own previous average (about 6%). Moreover, the trainees clearly seemed to have a better conception of what the course was going to be about when they arrived. One flaw was that some of the people who filled in the sheet wrote to complain that they had not realized that poor work on their part would lead to their applications being rejected. I saw that I would have to be very frank about this, and so the 'task sheets' have become 'test sheets'.

The rest of this article should be clearer if you know what one of these tests looks like. For example, it will be easier to discuss what might be novel about its design, focus, rationale and role.

Here (minus the blank spaces for writing), is most of a recent version along with much of the preface.

Extracts from the Entrance Test:

[the preface]

- Although we generally manage to have a certain amount of fun on the course, most of what follows is fairly stern. The reason for this is that the course can be failed. To be more precise, being accepted does not mean you will pass. (If this strikes you as unreasonable, read no further.)

This test is part of our endeavour to avoid encouraging people to risk the considerable outlay of money, time, effort and emotion if their chances of passing are not good. This test, by the way, is not the last bit of work we will ask of you before the course begins. Indeed, the course, in a sense, begins here. Four weeks is scant time in which to learn a fraction of what a good teacher knows, so we mean to start early, if we can, by getting you thinking about matters that will concern us later ... [two sections omitted here]

- All successful candidates must be able to hear well enough to cope with the aural clutter of a classroom.

Anyone intending to teach only in low-key, private, one-to-one situations is reminded that this course is designed to prepare people for teaching groups of adults in a wide range of teaching situations, including ones that are intensive.

Non-native speakers are seldom accepted.

No matter how much we stress the intensiveness of the course, people say we should have stressed it more. So, anyone who feels themselves on a very uneven emotional keel should think twice before proceeding with their application at this time. There is always next year. Do not expect to have the three sandwiched weekends free. Do not expect to be able to miss classes. That includes the first and last days. Please apply elsewhere if you are unable to set aside four whole weeks. Have no other projects going, please.

- An English teacher is a language teacher. People who have learned a language besides English have an advantage that comes from broaden-ed perspectives. If you speak no other language than English, are you sure you will have the ability to see things from the language learner's point of view here? Also, do you find thinking about language to be dull and, in general, frustrating? ... Not everyone should be an English teacher. This is where this test comes in.

- Before writing, you should do a bit of research. Do ask around, but be careful about putting down the first thing you hear or whatever first comes to mind ... Most people will need a copy of a learner's dictionary to complete the sections on the sound system of English ... [titles given] You should also buy a reference grammar. There are no excellent ones... Passable ones are: [titles given].

- Finally, our observation is that people who prepare themselves ... do better... Of course, the bulk of the mark is based on how one teaches, but teaching tends to be very wobbly if it's not based on reasonable understanding of language and of human interaction. For a very interesting introduction to the latter topic, read IMPRO by Keith Johnstone (Methuen). Although about improvisational theatre, it is hugely relevant to language teaching.

[the test]

1. Write your full name in phonetic script ... Note that your brand of English may not fit perfectly with the values given for some of the symbols in the dictionary.

AN ENTRANCE TEST FOR A ONE MONTH INTENSIVE PRE-SERVICE TESOL TRAINING COURSE cont'd

2. Write all of the symbols in the pronuncia-tion guide of your learner's dictionary that are different from the letters of the alphabet.

3. Regarding the consonants, which ones can you hum? (When you hum, your vocal chords vibrate.)

4. Which ones can you only hiss? (When you hiss, they don't.)

5. Which can you both hum and hiss?

6. How many sounds are there in each of the following words?:

fish that queen cough

7. In the following words, circle all of the letters that represent sounds that involve rounding your lips: [list given]

8. Circle all the 'stops', that is, letters representing sounds that completely stop the flow of air:

a namby-pamby gumshoe, a soapflake in trouble

9. Circle the instances of "to" where it would not usually be pronounced like "too". [list of sentences given]

10. Circle all the cases where that rhymes with cat in normal speech: [ditto]

11. Look through a newspaper. Find eight passive sentences. 'Translate' each one into the active voice. Change as little meaning as possible. Include only one Simple Present passive and only one Simple Past passive. (If you do not know what these two 'verb forms' are, find out somehow before you attempt this.)

12. Describe an industrial or semi-industrial process - first as you might to a four-year old child, then as you might write it for a technical publication. If you like, you can find the latter and write only the former. In your 'children's' passage, avoid passives. In your technical passage, solid underline all passives and wavy underline all the Greek Latinate vocabulary. Circle all the nouns that are derived from a verb by the addition of a suffix. Draw a box around each subordinate conjunction.

13. Briefly comment on each of the sentences in the following set. How do you imagine each would be defended by someone who preferred it to the alternatives? Assume that all the sentences in the set refer to one and the same situation, with the same possibility for reference to either sex. Get in role!

a. Ask each participant what they want.
b. Ask each participant what he wants.
c. Ask each participant what she or he wants.
d. Ask each participant what she wants.

14. A learner of English, elementary in ability, asks you what the difference in meaning is between small and narrow. Answer without using unnecessarily difficult language. Put quote marks around your answer to show exactly what you would say to the student.

15. [Ditto] in front of vs in the front of.

16. In which varieties of English are barley and Bali not at all homophonous? In which are these two words homophones or very nearly so? (E.g., R.P., Scottish, North of English, Irish English, General American/Canadian, Australian, West Country ...) Do as many as you can. If you don't know what R.P. is, find out.

17. Over each word in these two sentences, write what part of speech it is. Then, use the resulting 'part-of-speech formula' to make two new sentences which are as different in meaning as possible to these two but conform exactly to your 'part-of-speech' formula.

18. Feel free to comment on the language used on this test and in the introduction to it ...

[end of test]

Why is the test so hard?

So that it will shoo off dabblers and quitters.

What is it for? What does it reveal?

The RSA/UCLES Certificate is the most widely recognized entry level qualification for TESOL jobs in Europe. Thus, the aim is to not block people with no teaching experience. For example, most experienced native-speaker teachers are pretty ignorant both of the sound system of English and of how to deal with meaning in general. Hence the emphasis on these under-valued aspects of language knowledge in the test. The aim is to challenge the experienced and inexperienced in the same way and on the same ground. This is also why the attempt was made to include some problems which

cannot readily be answered without thought and whose solutions are not easily found in a book. What, I, the test writer, learn is whether applicants can either think things out or find things out.

I also decided to include some tasks that can be done with the help of a book so as to introduce candidates to useful reference materials.

I tried both to avoid all unnecessary terminology while including a foretaste of terminology that I reckon is inescapable.

Other observations:

Some of the questions require some flexibility in thought since this is, I think, essential for good interaction with language learners. Plus, I find out about some applicants (through comments they make) that they really have under-stood the instructions for a task but have declined to do it because it strikes them as unorthodox. This is well-worth learning about a would-be teacher since learners not infrequently pose problems that fall outside this or that teacherish orthodoxy.

Some of the tasks, like no. 12, take lots of time to do. This is because, despite the high pass rate, the course is very demanding, with plenty of lesson plans, class materials, and assignments to be prepared. The applicants, for their part, need a clear sign of the amount of work to come if they are to make the right decision about whether to press their application or not. A hard test helps here - especially, perhaps, in the case of recent university graduates, who tend to think, wrongly, that an RSA Certificate is something they can knock off with little effort compared to their university work.

The last test question tends to yield very interesting feedback. In particular, it has allowed, and continues to allow, me to discover many of the respects in which my early versions were ambiguous or unfair. I also learned a great deal about the effect on people of my stylistic idiosyncracies (e.g. my fairly typically American tendency to jumble formal and colloquial language).

Another aim here was to get prospective trainees used to speaking their minds right from the start by taking up their comments in a mostly non-judgemental fashion in my return correspondence.

Some things I chose not to include in the test

I left out reference to a number of old EFL chestnuts such as the mistaken idea that English nouns are either countable or uncountable, that reported speech is somehow exceptional and worth special attention, that phrasal verbs are wildly idiomatic, that the verb system should be the major focus of attention and so on.

More about the role of the test

It helps me to get to know applicants even after I have decided to accept them. The test usually generates a correspondence of from two to three exchanges. Applicants may ask me questions like "Will we learn more about this on the course?" and I respond. Or one may write, "I found doing this incredibly frustrating" to which I may reply with my thoughts on how the task in question relates to the role of a teacher as I see it and what I think it will enable me to learn about an applicant. In almost every case, I write back asking applicants to rethink and extend or redo this or that section or I note an implication of something they have written that I think they may not have been aware of.

Some sample comments from me:

"In question 8, you have missed two, I think, can you find them?"

"Question 11, your second active sentence has lost some of the meaning that's present in your passive. Also, what happened to the '-ing'? Doesn't this change the meaning somehow? Try again?"

Disadvantages and possible solutions

The test focuses on issues which some trainers would not devote much time to on the course. To ensure continuity between the test (including the subsequent correspondence) and the course itself, it could be a good idea to put the trainers for each course in charge of the entrance testing of their in-take of trainees. This would certainly help to promote the view that screening really is part of the course for those who get through. As it happens, one year I didn't work as a trainer on any of the courses. As a result, some of our trainees let it be known (in post-course feedback) that they felt let down because acquaintance developed between them and me during screening didn't seem to lead anywhere.

The work of reading, annotating and corresponding can be very time-consuming (though it can be done at home or on trains).

It seems easy to make a test like this too daunting for many applicants to attempt. A centre that does not have a large enough supply of quality applicants might run the risk of not filling their courses. I happen to think the risk is worth running given the fact that (given all the basics) good trainees do more to make a course successful from the trainees' point of view than anything else.

Other observations

I have gained the distinct impression from post-course evaluations that doing the test and engaging in the follow-on correspondence can remain a memorable part of a course.

Interestingly, it was feedback gathered after courses that prompted me to take a more serious tone in the preface reproduced above since some trainees pointed out that my deliberately colloquial and non-threatening phrasing (in the 1989 version) had "contradicted" the fact that the tasks were hard and exactingly commented on and, especially, the fact that the course could be failed. One complained

AN ENTRANCE TEST FOR A ONE MONTH INTENSIVE PRE-SERVICE TESOL TRAINING COURSE cont'd

that my attempt to be reassuring was confusing or even "sinister", like a tough cop and nice cop interrogation.

What if I think the applicant has simply parroted what someone else has told them?

I either send them further written questions about their original work or send new work or I arrange a phone interview and ask detailed language questions for which the groundwork has by then been laid.

Acknowledgement

The original impetus behind my beginning to think seriously about entrance tests came from Gerry Kenny, who also suggested I write this article. I got the idea of beginning a course before the course - through correspondence - from Tessa Woodward.

COMMENT ON SETH'S TEST BY GERRY KENNY

This test works like good teacher training: it changes attitudes. It changes attitudes to language, not by telling people to "see language differently if they want to become language teachers", but by enabling them to get a feel for how much there is to language.

The major new suggestion for beginning teachers is that language can be perceived and described technically; the suggestion is neatly made. We read questions which a non-specialist would grasp ("Regarding the consonants, which ones can you hum?") together with those s/he might not ("Simple Present passive" in the newspaper grammar exercise). There is also friendly advice such as "If you do not know what these two 'verb forms' are, find out somehow before you attempt this exercise".

It changes attitudes to personal learning strategies. The idea of "finding out somehow" is an important one for the beginning teacher. The introductory notes to the test make this clear. "Before writing, you should do a bit of research. Do ask around, but be careful about putting down the first thing you hear or whatever first comes to mind. It may be wrong. Most people will need a copy of a learner's dictionary to complete the sections on the sound system of English."

This last passage contains the kernel elements for a description (a job description?) of a successful teacher trainee mindset. S/he is someone who is willing to think before acting, who is willing to ask others for assistance, and who can use reference books judiciously. An RSA centre needs to know whether candidates can carry out a task demanding these qualities on application - to say nothing of the candidates needing to know for themselves.

It invites people to clarify their attitude towards the idea of the RSA course. There is no sense of buying a qualification here. Again, the introductory notes are clear: "Not everyone should be an English teacher. This is where the test comes in." The message is that those who take the test are candidates first and customers second: they may or may not be accepted to train at a centre whose academic standards have made this test possible. This means that ultimately the purpose of the test seems to be selection and self-selection. It gives the training centre a useful pre-admission profile of potential trainees in course-mode, and gives those potential trainees an opportunity to see if the RSA cap fits before "the considerable outlay of money, time, effort and emotion if their chances of passing are not good".

COURSES

FORMATION D'ANIMATEURS A LA PSYCHODRAMATURGIE LINGUISTIQUE

D'octobre 1991 à mars 1992 aura lieu à Paris, sur **six week-ends**, une formation à la **psycho dramaturgie linguistique** (PDL), méthode d' apprentissage des langues développée en Allemagne par Bernard et Marie Dufeu (Université de Mayence) (cf. B. Dufeu: **la psychodramaturgie linguistique ou l'apprentissage des langues par le vécu.** In 'Le français dans le monde', No. 175, février 1983, pp. 36-45, et **Britta and Rolf or the unfaithful mirror.** In 'The Teacher Trainer', Vol. 2, No.1, 1988).

Contenus de la formation:

- apprentissage des techniques principales de la PDL et transmission de leurs fondements
- Exercises de relaxation, respiration, vocalisation, rythme, intonation, intégrés dans la PDL
- Entraînement à la perception de soi en situation pédagogique et à la perception de certains aspects de la vie affective d'un groupe.

Animation:	Marie Dufeu
Lieu:	Au centre de Paris, rue de Rennes.
Dates:	4-6 X, 8-10 XI, 13-15 XII 1991, 17-19 I, 14-16 II et 20-22 III 1992 Du vendredi 17 heures au dimanche 14 heures.
Frais de participation:	7000 Francs.
Information:	Marie Dufeu, Rilkaellee 187 D-6500 Mainz 31 Tel. code de l'Allemagne et 6131 7 35 44

If you are interested in **experimenting** with the **psychodramaturgie linguistique** as a participant in French, Italian or German as a foreign language, and you can organise an intensive course, (maximum 12 participants in a group) for a week-end or more, write to Marie Dufeu. Write too if you want more information or a bibliography on PDL.

Process Options Series : Idea 17

NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE
by Les Embleton

The technique I'm going to describe is one which was mentioned by Dr. Jon Roberts during an MATEFL course module I attended earlier this year at CALS, Reading University. I'm afraid I do not know who originated the technique.

I will first explain the technique and then describe how I used it on a course for provincial teacher trainers at secondary level in Ecuador.

The method has some similarities to brain-storming; however it is more systematic in the way ideas are collected, thus ensuring that everybody in the group contributes. It avoids the problem of obtaining ideas only from the most vociferous members of the group, which can limit both interpretation of the task and the number of ideas generated. The technique also ensures that priorities are systematically ordered.

PROCEDURE

1. Task Clarification

The task is presented on the blackboard or OHP and the group allowed time to discuss the task to ensure it is fully understood.

2. Individual Idea Generation in Silence

Individuals list their own private responses during a fixed time period long enough to ensure that this activity is unhurried. They should then rank their own list to establish their personal priorities.

3. Master List

The group leader writes down a numbered list of ideas on the blackboard or OHP taking only one idea from each group member in rotation. The ideas must not be edited or evaluated in any way at this stage. If a group member feels that they have no further ideas to contribute from their list they should be allowed simply to pass; they should not feel under pressure to come up with ideas.

4. Item Clarification

Each item is discussed to ensure everyone understands what it means. Only clarification is allowed. A member may only request withdrawal of an item that they themselves have suggested. They can do this if, on thinking about it at this stage, they consider the idea is already adequately expressed by another member's item. No pressure should be exerted on people to do this however.

5. Evaluation

Items are now prioritised by the group. Each person may have five weighted votes (i.e. five points for the item they feel is the most important, four points for the next and so on). As the group leader goes through the list of items on the OHP, each participant in turn is asked what score they wish to give to a specific item. The total score is noted alongside that item on the OHP. Priorities will thus soon be clearly seen.

This then allows actions to be taken (see below) or normal group discussion to proceed.

Group leaders should remember, then, not to

a) reinterpret a person's ideas.

b) modify the participants' own wording.

c) participate in the generation of ideas.

d) pressurise or rush group members in any way.

e) allow participants to criticise or persuade each other.

f) interpret results in any way.

POSSIBLE USES ON A TEACHER TRAINING COURSE

I used the above technique on a course for provincial teacher trainers in Ecuador for the purpose of determining their expectations for the course. The majority had already run provincial courses and were therefore in a good position to articulate their needs. It was particularly interesting to see how some needs expressed by the more dominant members of the group, which one might quite naturally regard as significant, vanished into insignificance after voting had taken place. Once the group's priorities were clear, I developed and modified the design of the course accordingly.

While the course objectives were not totally defined by the participants, according to their responses in the end-of-course evaluation I was successful in catering for their needs. Certainly one reason for this was the technique's capacity to identify in an objective way the majority's expectations.

The technique may also be useful at the end of a course to discover the most important things the participants consider they have learnt during the course.

In general, the method is useful where you do not want to predetermine participant re-sponses in any way, and wish to discover the genuine majority feeling of the group on a specific matter. Its disadvantages are that it is very time-consuming and it is not in itself (although it can lead to) a very communicative activity.

TEACHER TRAINING GAMES SERIES
by Sara Walker

For a full rationale of the use of games in teacher training and development, as well as for Games 1 and 2 in the start of this series, please see 'The Teacher Trainer', Volume 4, Number 3. More games in Sara Walker's series will appear in the next issue.

GAME 5

Teacher Talk (boardgame)

Objective: to provide a variety of topics for serious discussion in groups, within the framework of a game. It is hoped that trainees who are relatively quiet in plenary sessions will air their personal views freely in this context. It should also eliminate Trainer talking time and maximise trainee talking time!

Materials: one dice, one board and one set of each series of small cards for every group of 4-6 trainees or teachers.

Preparation: copy the game board (you might like to enlarge it) and the small cards. Put them on cardboard for re-use. Label each small card on the back, (S = the student, T = the teacher, C = culture, LANG = the language, LESS = lesson planning).

Rules:

1. Trainees form groups of about 4 players.

2. Each player makes their own marker to move round the board. (This can be a slip of paper with his/her initials on it, or any small object such as a pen top, a paper clip, etc.).

3. The small cards are organised in sets, and each set is shuffled and placed in a pile, face downwards.

4. Each player in turn shakes the dice, moves his/her marker the appropriate number of squares on the game board. If s/he lands, for example, on a square marked "the student", s/he must pick up the top card from the S pile, give his/her views and initiate a discussion in the group. When a player lands on a "Free choice" square, s/he may choose the top card from any pile. (Trainers can control the time, if they want to, by giving a set time for each answer, e.g. 2-3 minutes). Players themselves may also establish more detailed rules).

5. The first player to reach the "Finish here" square is the winner.

Note:

Trainers may vary the categories of discussion topics and the individual questions to suit their own trainees. The "Culture" questions may not be appropriate to all situations, so the trainer could either cut this category out and rearrange the board, or put some other category of question in the "Culture" squares on the board.

The TEACHER questions

Do you plan to remain a teacher all your working life?

.....

"Good teachers are born, not made". Discuss.

.....

What can a teacher do to motivate students who don't really want to learn English?

.....

What do you like MOST about teaching?

.....

What do you like LEAST about teaching?

.....

Do you (or would you) like to use pairwork in your classes? Explain.

.....

How do you (or would you) correct student compositions?

.....

How many different roles can you define for the teacher?
When would each be appropriate?

.....

Describe a teacher who influenced your life or your learning and explain how and why.

.....

The STUDENT questions

Describe the most difficult student you have ever had to teach.

.....

In your view, what are the characteristics of the ideal EFL student?

.....

Should silent students be made to speak in class?

Teacher Talk - a boardgame for teachers and trainees designed by Sara Walker.

Throw the dice, move your marker round the board and answer a question for each square you land on.

.....

Is there such a thing as a student who cannot learn a foreign language? Explain.

.....

How far and in what ways can learner training help language learners?

.....

How do you react to groupwork when you are in the role of a student? Explain.

.....

As a language learner, how often do you use memorisation, and how effective was it for you as a learning strategy?

.....

Should students in a monocultural group be allowed to use their native language in class? If so, when and why?

.....

Describe your own WORST experience as a student.

.....

Describe one/some of your BEST experiences as a student.

.....

CULTURE questions

Is it possible to separate a language from its culture? Explain.

.....

"English should be taught as a means of international communication not as the language of a specific country, such as Britain or the USA." Discuss.

.....

Does literature have a place in the language classroom? Explain.

.....

What cultural differences can you pick out between the culture of your home country and the culture of either Britain or the USA?

.....

Are there any ways in which students who study abroad can be effectively prepared to face possible culture shock? Explain.

.....

"Listening and reading exercises in imported (British or American) coursebooks are often difficult for cultural reasons, rather than for linguistic reasons." Discuss.

.....

How much priority is given to modern language teaching in the national education scheme of your country? Why?

.....

How much influence have British or American language and culture had in your own country? Explain and give examples.

.....

In some countries, the English language is seen as a vehicle of unwanted cultural domination. How would you deal with this problem?

.....

If you had to teach your own language in another country, how much cultural content would you include in your classes? Why?

.....

The LANGUAGE questions

What similarities and differences can you pick out between first language acquisition and second language learning?

.....

If you had to learn another foreign language, how would you like to learn it? Describe your ideal conditions.

.....

What is a language?

.....

In your own use of a second or foreign language, are you more interested in fluency or accuracy? Explain.

.....

To what extent can or should the four skills (listening, speaking reading and writing) be separated in language teaching/learning? Explain.

.....

What is the place of vocabulary in your priorities for teaching/learning? Explain.

.....

How much importance do you attach to grammar in language teaching/learning? Explain.

.....

"It is not enough to teach students the elements of a language. They must be taught how to use the language in effective communication." Discuss and explain.

.....

How did you learn English (or any other modern language)? Give details.

.....

If you were writing a coursebook to teach your own language (or any other modern language) what kind of grading scheme would you use? Why?

.....

LESSONS questions

What makes a good lesson plan?

.....

What is a task-centred activity? Give at least one example, and comment on its objectives.

.....

Comment on the merits of a coursebook or set of materials you use (or would like to use).

.....

"The teacher should always use the target language, not the students' mother tongue, in class." Give your view and explain.

.....

Why do carefully-planned lessons sometimes go wrong? Give as many reasons as you can think of.

.....

How do you feel about being observed (by a trainer, a senior teacher or a colleague) when you are teaching? Why?

.....

"Students often learn more effectively when they are concentrating on the content of the lesson, not the forms of language being used." Comment and explain.

.....

"The most difficult problem in lesson-planning is getting the timing of each activity right." Give your view and explain.

.....

What can a teacher do to ensure that at least some of the activities in each lesson plan are student-centred?

.....

To what extent do you use a prescribed formula (e.g. presentation/controlled practice/free practice - or any similar precepts) in your lesson planning? Why?

Variations:

1. In Teacher Development groups, it should be possible to give teachers a blank board and some small cards and get them to devise their own game on these lines. They could, perhaps, be given just the Materials, Preparation and Rules parts of these instructions and left to work things out for themselves.

2. To save preparation time, the trainer can select or devise 25 questions and write them on the board itself. This tends to create a problem when 2 players in succession land on the same square, though.

Author's Corner

Penny Ur is the author of "Discussions that Work", "Teaching Listening Comprehension" and "Grammar Practice Activities" all published by Cambridge University Press. Below Penny answers some questions about her books.

T.W. How did you start writing Penny?

P.U. Well, when I was teaching a course in spoken proficiency at college, I started getting very interested in what sort of things got students to talk and what didn't. I came to the conclusion that the best way was to ask students to do something rather than to talk about something. A task, in other words. It sounds mundane today but at the time I thought it was quite world-shaking! I felt I was onto something so I wrote a paper about it. The paper was too long to be an article and too short to be a book so I was stuck as to what to do with it!

T.W. What did you do?

P.U. Well, really I had a series of lucky instances. First of all Chris Brumfit came to Israel. And, at the end of a wonderful seminar he gave with Alan

Maley, he said that if anyone had further questions they should feel free to come and chat to him at this hotel. So I decided to be a real Israeli with a full measure of "Chutzpah" ... and went along and told him about my paper! To cut a long story short he asked me to send it to him in England. I did and he passed it to Adrian du Plessis at CUP. Adrian invited me to extend the paper into a book and gave me Michael Swan as an editor. The paper thus turned into "Discussions that Work"!

T.W. Was it easy turning the paper into a book?

P.U. At first, I didn't have any idea how to write really. I did a first rough draft in pencil. Then I typed this on a little typewriter and sent it off to Michael Swan. Michael would then send it back with big red lines through it and critical and complimentary remarks on it! I re-wrote lots and lots of times until both Michael and I were satisfied. The book was successful enough for CUP to come back and say, "Well what are you going to write now?"

T.W. Your next book was "Teaching Listening Comprehension".

P.U. Yes, this time there were not quite so many red lines! So Michael took me through that one too. At the end of it, I wrote to CUP to say I would like to write another but I wasn't sure they would want to take it on. I said I could send it to another publisher. I got this rather hurt and offended letter back saying, "Don't you dare! Stay with us!" So I did "Grammar Practice Activities" with them too.

T.W. What was the difference between that book and the first two?

P.U. It was a much more ambitious project. It took me four years to write. In the first year I collected material. I already had a card index of grammar practice activities for my own teaching so I used that as a basis. And I scoured periodicals, games books and course books. I asked colleagues too until I had a big card index that I could whittle and sort into categories. In the second year I tried out the ideas in the classroom. The third year was writing and re-writing and the fourth year was polishing, mopping up mistakes and making sure the illustrations were OK. I was in full-time teaching too so I was writing evenings, weekends and holidays.

T.W. How did you find the time?

P.U. One thing that helped was that I live on a Kibbutz. I don't have to worry about shopping, cooking and childcare so much.

T.W. Could you describe your writing process?

P.U. With the first two books I drafted in pencil, typed and re-typed. But now I have a word-processor and I just make brief notes and then type the first draft straight onto the word processor. As I'm typing, I think of new ideas I would like to include so I have to jot them down separately so I don't forget them. But my writing is really re-writing from the beginning. I re-draft each sentence after writing it. When I finish a paragraph I re-draft it. I finish a chapter and I re-draft again. It's very messy but it's the way I do it. E.M. Forster said something like, "How can I tell what I think before I hear what I say?". How can I tell what I think before I see what I've written! Writing clarifies my ideas. I see as I'm writing what I really want to say.

T.W. Why did you write "Grammar Practice Activities"?

P.U. Because I needed it! I needed the activities for my own teaching. Also because I was irritated at the rejection of grammar by over-sold communicative methodologies. I felt that the rejection of grammar as a tool for effective English teaching was wrong. I wanted to express the idea I wanted to express the idea that communication and grammar can go together and are more effective when they do. I felt that strongly - at gut level!

T.W. What are your main hopes for the book?

P.U. I hope a lot of people will buy it and use it! It's not the money. The money goes to my kibbutz anyway but it's a wonderful thing to feel that people like the book and use it.

T.W. What's your next project?

P.U. The next is a lighter project. I'm writing a book of short, five-minute activities with Andrew Wright! After that I'd like to work on a more serious project again on teacher training.

T.W. Why do you think your books have been so successful?

P.U. Because they are written by a teacher, for teachers. I was in full-time teaching all the time I was writing. I was looking at everything through the eyes of someone teaching large classes of noisy teenagers learning English every day. The books are all "real" for teachers. The activities are "do-able", workable.

T.W. Penny, thanks!

PEER TEACHING - THE ARGENTINE METHOD
by Donard Britten

This is a form of accelerated microteach-ing without hardware, first developed by Michael Wallace on an in-service course in Buenos Aires (hence the choice of name). It allows a relatively large group of teachers to study particular details of teaching behaviour in a practical but low-stress way, in a fairly short time. It is therefore suitable for experienced teachers, but not for beginners. The teaching behaviour that is studied is usually a teaching skill, preferably one that lends itself to peer-teaching, for example:

quick pre-teaching of vocabulary
questioning procedure
varying the question types
encouraging alternative answers
progressive erasure for memorisation
progressive build-up and erasure of a substitution table
pair practice.

In summary, the steps in the Argentine Method are as follows:

1. Discussion of the skill (plenary)
2. Lesson planning (in groups)
3. Reciprocal peer-teaching (twinned groups)
4. Discussion of the lessons (twinned groups)
5. Final evaluation (plenary).

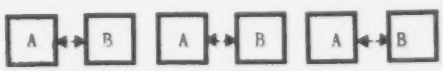
Now here, in more detail, is a description of each of these stages.

1. Discussion of the skill

The trainer leads a plenary discussion in order to elicit the main points of procedure of the skill - the essential steps to go through, and maybe some DOs and DON'Ts. A checklist of, say, 8 to 10 of the main points can be agreed, on the board, and copied down by participants. These are the points they must try and respect in their microlessons, and use as evaluation criteria afterwards. (One way for the trainer to initiate the discussion is to peer-teach a very short microlesson, on the chosen skill, making as many procedural mistakes as possible.) Time: 30-60 minutes.

2. Lesson planning

Divide the participants into an even number of groups (4 to 6 teachers per group). Identify and twin "A" groups and "B" groups, thus:

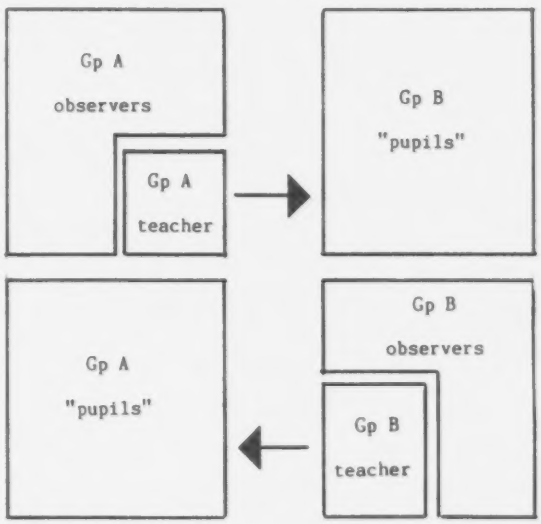


Each small group then works alone to prepare its microlesson. It facilitates both preparation and the subsequent feedback if you give them lesson material to work on and specify the class level. For example, depending on the skill, groups could be given a very short text, a substitution table, a short dialogue or a pair of cue-cards for pairwork. All the "A" groups should have one piece of material, and all the "B" groups another piece of the same type. Time: 20-30 minutes.

3. Reciprocal peer-teaching

Each group now choose their representative to teach their jointly-prepared microlesson to the other group they are twinned with. It is important that the representative should be chosen only after the lesson has been planned, so that everyone is fully involved in planning. If no one volunteers in a group, ask them to draw lots.

The representative of each "A" group now teaches their lesson to the corresponding "B" group, while the other "A"s act as observers, using the checklist prepared earlier and noting the strengths and weaknesses of their colleague's microlesson.



Immediately afterwards, the roles are reversed. The representative of each "B" group now teaches their microlesson to the "pupils" of the corresponding "A" group, while his/her fellow "B"s act as observers.

As all the twinned groups are peer-teaching simultaneously, enough teaching spaces with blackboards must be available. Time: 20-30 minutes.

Discussion of the lessons

Each pair of twinned groups now meet ("A"s and "B"s together) to discuss their two microlessons. There are three golden rules for this feedback session:

I Relevance. Only the points on the check-list may be discussed. It is abso-

lutely taboo to comment on the teacher's English.

II Strengths. Go for the good points whenever possible.

III Participation. Everyone should say their word.

Previous joint planning of the micro-lessons tends to make group members supportive of their colleague who taught. Moreoever, feed-back is generally more objective and more humane if it is conducted between participants, without the trainer eavesdropping. It also helps if you provide a clear feedback goal, focusing not on the teacher, but on the skill, for example: Assess the relative difficulty of the different items in the checklist. Time: 30-60 minutes.

5. Final evaluation

In a final plenary, the trainer can synthesise the results of the different feedback groups, asking questions such as:

- Which aspects of the skill were most successful?
- Which aspects were hardest?
- Did we focus on the right things in the checklist? Should it be changed in any way?
- What do you think of this working method? Would you like to use it again?
- If so, what other skills would you like to work on?

Time: 10-30 minutes.

JOURNAL EXCHANGES

"The Teacher Trainer" has afranged journal exchanges with

Aula de Ingles	(Spain)
IATEFL Newsletter	(UK)
English Language Teaching Journal	(UK)
Cross Currents	(Japan)
English Teachers' Journal	(Israel)
Modern English Teacher	(UK)
RELC Journal	(Singapore)
The Portuguese Newsletter	(Portugal)
Forum	(USA)
Practical English Teaching	(UK)
Focus on English	(India)
TESOL Newsletter	(USA)

and is abstracted by 'Language Teaching', The British Education Index, the ERIC clearing house and Contents Pages in Education.

Observation and Feedback

IN-SERVICE OBSERVATION : REASONS AND ROLES

by Bill Johnston

INTRODUCTION

I work as the Director of Studies of a small language centre (10 members of staff in all) attached to the University of Wroclaw in Poland. We offer courses in English from post-elementary to advanced level for postgraduate members of staff of the University.

The question of observation was one which concerned me from the time I took up my post here over a year ago. I felt that the whole issue contained a number of innate conflicts, if not contradictions, which deserved to be investigated. Firstly, as Director of Studies, I felt it my duty to visit the other teachers' classes quite simply to show that I was interested; and yet I had an instinctive dislike for the checklist type of observation where detailed timings are recorded and notes are made under global headings such as 'clarity of instructions', 'classroom management' etc.

Secondly, there are all the usual problems of observation: the presence of the observer distracting the learners' attention; the nervousness of many teachers, which often produces a highly untypical performance; the sheer impossibility anyway of seeing a 'typical lesson'. These problems are of course countered by the disadvantages of not observing, i.e. the inability of checking on a teacher's progress; the apparent lack of interest, mentioned above, which can have a negative effect on the teacher's professional motivation (I know this from personal experience); and the absence of guidance, particularly for less experienced teachers, who often feel that they need to be told 'whether they're doing it properly.'

Finally, there were issues arising from our specific situation. Observer and observed belonged to the same small group of teachers and knew each other well. Observations were carried out by the same person over an extended period of time (several years), and the observation was in objective terms non-evaluative, since there was no exam to be passed or failed. Our situation seemed to offer considerable possibilities.

I felt, then, that a new approach to the whole issue of observation was necessary. Over the last year we have been experimenting with a number of departures from the traditional observation format. Few, if any, of these are new, except to our centre; but I felt that it was worth gathering them together,

partly to clarify the broader change in attitude towards the potential advantages and disadvantages of observation that they represent, and partly to recount how they were introduced in a specific teaching environment.

A CATALYST

The modes of observation suggested here have emerged gradually over the course of the year. One catalyst, however, which I decided to employ was a questionnaire which I handed out to teachers and which is reproduced here.

OBSERVATION: A QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer these questions in as much detail as you want or are able to go into. If the answer varies according to who is observing you, please state this in your response.

1. Do you prefer to be observed frequently, rarely, or not at all? Why?

2. Is your teaching different while you are being observed? If so, in what way?

3. Would you rather be observed for the whole duration of a lesson/topic or only for part? Why?

4. What do you most dislike about being observed?

5. What aspects of the observer's behaviour do you find most irritating or distracting? How should the observer behave?

6. After you have been observed, do you like to talk about the lesson with the observer? Why, or why not?

7. Are there, or can there be, any benefits to being observed? If so, what are they?

8. Would you like to see any changes in the way you are observed? If so, what changes?

I was not entirely happy with this questionnaire; for example in question one I should have been more specific about exactly how often each teacher felt they would like to be observed.

However, in general, the questionnaire served its purpose in eliciting some thinking and writing on the subject of observation.

All but one of the teachers responded. Their responses provided much valuable information about individual and common preferences. In general, it was significant that, however nervous they said they were, all the respondents felt that observation was a useful, and indeed necessary, part of their development as a teacher.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Here, then, is a summary of the different variations on 'standard' observation which we have worked with. None of these ideas represents the 'right' way to observe or be observed; they all merely aim to increase the trainer's, and the teacher's, repertoire of techniques.

1. Observation after the lesson

This is a technique I learnt from Mario Rinvolucri (see Rinvolucri 1988: 20-21). The trainer, instead of sitting in on the lesson, agrees to meet the teacher immediately after

the lesson; s/he then listens carefully to an account of the lesson from the teacher's point of view. It is important that the trainer listens intently, asking questions if and when necessary, and that the teacher describes the lesson in considerable detail. Although the trainer is at a disadvantage in hearing only one side of the story, and must reconstruct the lesson from the teacher's account, this technique is considerably less threatening than standard observation, and is a gentle alternative for the first one or two observation sessions with teachers who are especially nervous about being observed. Such a session also, one hopes, acts like a standard observation in sharpening the teacher's awareness of the lesson, and helps even more by allowing the teacher to articulate thoughts and feelings about it in detail immediately afterwards, with a genuine need to describe the lesson but without the fear of being contradicted.

2. Teacher-teacher observations

In his book on Classroom Research, Hopkins (1985) states something which I feel to be profoundly true, and yet which surprisingly little teacher training seems to take into account:

> It is passé to talk about the 'sanctity of the classroom door' and the isolation that teachers work in. But despite the various innovations in team teaching in the sixties and seventies, the classroom remains very much an individual preserve. Yet it is well established that teachers learn best from other teachers, so this vast potential for mutual improvement remains largely untapped.
>
> (Hopkins 1985: 121; my emphasis)

We had already incorporated into our timetable monthly meetings of teachers teaching at the same level so that they could talk about what they had done in class since the last meeting. However, though this provided some sort of indirect knowledge about the way

we work, I felt very strongly that the most direct way that the teachers could begin to learn from each other more extensively was by actually seeing each other teach. For this reason, we have introduced two new ideas:

(i) First, we have begun a system of 'mutual observation', whereby two or three teachers agree to visit each other's classes. This arrangement is on an informal basis, without the DOS needing to know if or when it's happen-ing. I have stressed that, as much as possible, teachers should invite colleagues to their lessons - in this way the image of observation as 'intrusion' might at least partially be countered.

(ii) Secondly, I have introduced and fostered the practice of team teaching. This, surprisingly, was a new notion for most of the teachers, and has been embraced more enthusiastically by some than by others. It is, however, an ideal, non-threatening way for two (or more) teachers to see each other work, and even more important, to take an active and supportive role in that work by collaborating fully on the planning, execution and evaluation of the lesson. (Johnston, 1990)

3. Status and role

I believe that, in our centre at least, one of the most important blocks in preventing a proper exploitation of the possibilities offered by observation is the problem of status. For most of the teachers, and perhaps unusually the more experienced in particular, my presence in the classroom is always that of the Director of Studies evaluating his staff. I do all I can in words and deeds to reassure them that basically I'm on their side, and that I'm not interested judgmentally; but I can tell that subconsciously much of this attitude remains. There is no easy solution, of course; but one idea I have had which seems at least to help is that of reversing the usual observation roles. This again has had two separate manifestations:

(i) I have asked the more experienced staff to invite teachers who have just started work at our centre to their lessons. Thus, the roles are switched and it is the less experienced teachers who are observing the more experienced. In this way, the whole purpose of the observation changes - the observer is not there to monitor and evaluate but to learn, and again the ethos is supportive rather than judgmental.

(ii) One of the teachers, in response to a question in the questionnaire, said that she was waiting for the day when a potential observer would invite her to his or her own lesson. I took her up on this, and invited her to one of my classes, not as a 'model lesson' - a notion I find almost as offputting as it is absurd - but simply to let her see me teach, make mistakes, do things well or not so well, and thus, again I hope, to reduce the 'status gap', which can do little but hinder any real progress.

4. Different purposes for observation

In a situation such as ours, there can be any number of specific purposes for observation. Recently, for instance, I observed a class in order to see one of the learners who had been causing difficulties - thus, it was the class or part of it, rather than the teacher, that was under observation. Generally, before I observe any teacher as part of the regular observation schedule I ask whether they would like me to concentrate on any particular aspect of the lesson. One teacher, for example, asked me to pay attention to teacher talking time, another asked my opinion about the materials used, and so on. If the teacher is able to pinpoint an element of the lesson about which they have doubts the observation and the subsequent discussion have a much stronger focus.

AN OBSERVER'S CODE OF PRACTICE

Finally, I should like to offer my personal checklist of things which, in my observer/DOS role at least, I need to do when I observe someone:

- arrange the observation beforehand;
- ask the teacher whether they would like the observation to focus on a particular aspect of the lesson;
- arrive just before the lesson starts and ask the teacher where s/he would like me to sit;
- react humanly to what's going on in the lesson;
- watch the class as well as the teacher;
- recognise the general impact of my presence on the teacher, the learners and the lesson;
- thank the teacher after the lesson;
- in the subsequent discussion, let the teacher give his/her assessment of the lesson first;
- always remember what it's like to be observed!

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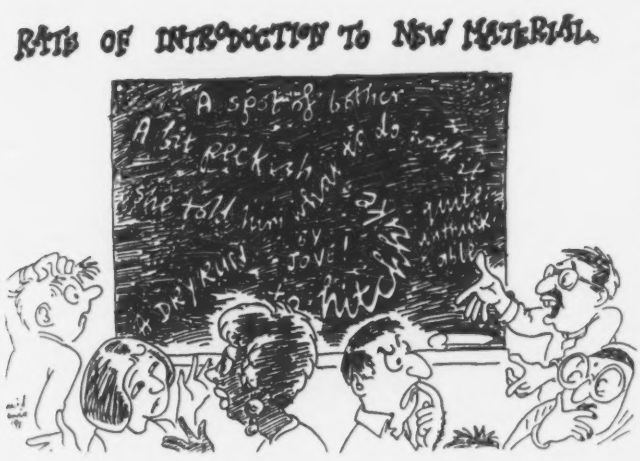
Current Research

FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY LEARNING AND THE PACE OF INSTRUCTION

Peter F.W. Preece, School of Education, University of Exeter

The pace of instruction - two models

Higgins (1990) has reported investigations of the speech rates of teachers in foreign language classes and commented on the importance of temporal variables in general. The pace of instruction is not only a matter of speech rates but also concerns the rate of introduction of new material (e.g. vocabulary). Two contrasting qualitative models of the relationship between the rate of learning (e.g. number of foreign language vocabulary items learnt per lesson) and the pace of instruction (e.g. number of foreign language vocabulary items introduced per lesson) can be envisaged. In the plateau model, as the pace increases, the rate of learning increases until a maximum value is reached, after which it remains constant. The maximum rate of learning is then a natural measure of the student's aptitude.



In the peak model, as the pace increases, the rate of learning increases to a maximum and then subsequently falls, and the maximum rate of learning may again be taken as a measure of aptitude. The plateau model is plausible if students adopt a strategy of concentrating on a part of the material taught in a lesson equal to the maximum amount that they are able to learn. The peak model is plausible if students endeavour to learn all that is taught in a lesson, so that a high pace of instruction reduces the opportunity for rehearsal and the elaboration necessary for retention.

A quantitative, algebraic (quadratic) version of the peak model has been proposed by Preece (1990). This model has the plausible property that for a low pace of instruction the amount learnt is roughly equal to the amount taught. With increasing pace, the amount learnt in a lesson, in this model, falls increasingly short of the amount taught and eventually reaches a peak (equal to pupil aptitude) and then falls. An aptitude-treatment interaction is incorporated in the model as the optimum pace to maximize learning increases with increasing pupil aptitude. This quadratic model has been shown to be consistent with some data obtained by Ebbinghaus (1902) on the learning of stanzas from Schiller's translation of the Aeneid and with data on the deficit in learning for able pupils taught in heterogeneous classes (Preece, 1990).

An investigation of learning and the pace of instruction

The study reported here is a direct investigation of the interrelationship of learning, aptitude, and the pace of instruction, using foreign language (Dutch) vocabulary items. The subjects were 40 first and second year undergraduate science education students (31 female, 9 male).

A bank of words was obtained from a Dutch-English dictionary (Prick Van Wely, 1967). The criteria for selection were that the Dutch word should contain 8-10 letters, be a noun or verb, and have no obvious link with its English equivalent. From this vocabulary bank, lists of 6, 9,12, and 15 words were constructed and these four written lists of Dutch words and their English equivalents were the basic learning materials in the study.

Learning/testing sessions were held at weekly intervals, with subjects given eight minutes of self-study to learn the vocabulary, with instructions to aim to learn each word equally well. At each session, each of the four versions (6,9,12, 15 words) was taken by about a quarter of the sample, so that in the end all subjects received all four versions. At the end of each learning period all subjects completed appropriate test sheets. These contained an effectively random list of the relevant English words against which subjects were to write the Dutch equivalents.

Results and discussion

A small number of subjects also received a second version of the 9 word learning/testing materials. This enabled the estimation of parallel-form reliability, by correlating scores with the scores on the original 9 word test. The correlation was 0.85, indicating substantial reliability for the measurement of individual differences.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY LEARNING AND THE PACE OF INSTRUCTION cont'd

Each subject's highest score on any of the four tests was used to split the sample into high, medium, and low aptitude groups. The high aptitude group consisted of those subjects with a highest score of 8 or more words correct on any of the four tests. The medium aptitude group was defined by maximum scores of 5 to 7 and the low aptitude group by maximum scores of 4 or under.

Figure 1 shows the medium scores for each group on each test.

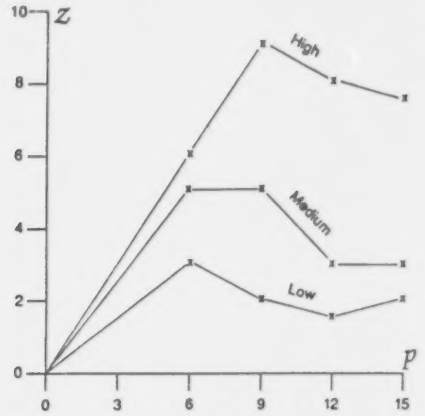


FIGURE 1. Median number of vocabulary items learnt (z) plotted against number presented (p), for high, medium, and low aptitude groups.

The test instructions required subjects 'to learn each word equally well' - a strategy identified above with the peak model, and the results for each group in Figure 1 conform to this model. The aptitude-treatment interaction implicit in the quadratic model - a higher optimum pace of instruction with pupils of greater aptitude - is also evident in Figure 1. However, the maximum in the high-ability group curve occurs at a lower pace than the quadratic model predicts, and the decline in the rate of learning with increasing pace, after the maxima, is less steep in each of the curves in Figure 1 than implied by the quadratic model. The curves in Figure 1 appear to be be-tween the plateau and quadratic models.

For each aptitude group, the curves in Figure 1 show intriguing evidence of a deceleration in the decline in the rate of learning with increasing pace after the maxima, with even a suggestion of an up-turn in the rate of learning for one group. This suggests, perhaps, that with a high pace of instruction, some subjects tend to switch learning strategies from attempting to learn all the material to concentrating on only a part, corresponding to a transfer from the peak to the plateau model. This requires further investigation.

The plateau model obviously suggests that there will be little change in the rate of learning with variations in pace, once the pace of instruction is high enough. Moreoever, the peak model also implies little change in learning over a range of values of pace, as substantial changes in pace, around the peak, result in only small changes in learning. Thus models of this kind can provide a plausible explanation for the common fnding that changes in teaching process variables have little effect on student learning (Preece, 1976). Peak models are plausible for any teaching process variables (e.g. frequency of questions, difficulty of material, etc.) where extremes of teacher behaviour are likely to be counter-productive.

The lack of effect of changes in teaching on student learning - the Qualitative Principle of Teaching (Preece, 1983) - is more evident in heterogeneous than in homogeneous groups, and aptitude-treatment interactions can furnish an explanation for this. Thus on increasing pace from 6 to 9 words in Figure 1, the high aptitude group shows an increase in the rate of learning, the low aptitude group shows a de-cline, and the medium group no change, in the rate of learning. So in a heterogeneous group of students, such a change in pace would have little effect on average. Between values of pace of 6 and 9 words, learning is positively related to pace in the high aptitude group and negatively related to pace in the low aptitude group. Such reversals in the sign of process-product correlations between high and low apti-tude groups are probably widespread (Chapman, 1979). This suggests that, in general, differences in teaching may affect the range, rather than the overall level, of achievement in classes (e.g. the greater divergence between high and low aptitude students at a pace of 9 words compared with the divergence at a pace of 6 words in Figure 1).

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Peter Preece has worked in teacher education since 1967 and has been at the University of Exeter since 1970. He is currently a senior lecturer in education.

A JAZZ CHANT FOR USE IN A TEACHER TRAINING SESSION

If you'd like to introduce teachers to the idea of Jazz Chants you could play some or do some of the ones in Carolyn Graham's book called "Jazz Chants", (OUP, ISBN 01950240079) (she has also published "Small Talk", "Jazz Chant Fairy Tales" and "Jazz Chants for Children").

If you'd rather use one that is relevant to teachers who will be giving workshops for each other, why not try Greg Acker's chant below. The chant is called "Steps to a workshop" and each verse is designed to reinforce the different steps taken when planning and executing a workshop. The steps are: Carry out a needs survey, plan the workshop, gather resources, do the workshop, evaluate the workshop, and then follow-up the workshop. Here's the chant:

Steps To A Workshop

CHORUS

Look at the steps
Check out the steps
Consider these steps to a ... workshop!

What do we need?
What do we want?
How are you going to ... find out?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

Where will it be?
When will it be?
Who's going to come to your ... workshop?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

What will you need?
Who will you ask?
Who's going to help with your ... workshop?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

What will we learn?
What will we do?
What are the topics for your ... workshop?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

How did it go?
Was it good or bad?
What did we think of the ... workshop?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

What happens next?
What can we do?
How do we follow-up the ... workshop?

(REPEAT CHORUS) **Greg Acker**

THOUGHTS AFTER NELLE!
by Patrick Philpott

NELLE stands for Networking English Language Learning in Europe. It was started in 1989 and held a conference in Maastricht, Holland in November 1990, which I attended. It is conceived basically as a forum for English Language Teachers' Associations (ELTA's) all over Europe. I attended as unofficial representative of my regional Spanish organisation GRETA. NELLE also proposes to improve working conditions for EFL teachers and raise standards in general. It also hopes to set up networks between associations, local groups and individual teachers for their mutual benefit and enrichment. There are lots of very keen and competent people in NELLE and it looks like making quite an impact on EFL in Europe over the crucial 1992-and-after years. If you'd like more information contact the secretary, Sue Sebbage, Postbus 964, NL-6200AZ, Maastricht, Holland.

Dr. Lee gave a paper on teacher training at the Maastricht conference. Arthur Van Essen gave some thoughts on German and on EFL complacency in a closing talk. Between these two and much other discussion I found a few questions springing to mind, such as:

How long will people continue to believe that four weeks in London (if you are a native) or two weeks in England, at your local taxpayers' expense, at the feet of a "guru" (if you happen to be a non-native) will set you up for life as a qualified EFL practitioner? Contrariwise, when will every prospective teacher be put through a proper three-year course?

How long will in-service training continue to be the joke it is in many countries - set up in 24 hours without curriculum or course specifications by the British Council, or by trainers who have not got beyond toilet-training their children? When will ministries all over the world make it an integral part of their language teachers' careers, with suffi-cient free time allocations from normal teach-ing duties, grants to cover expenses incurred, and a cogent credits system?

How long will the endemic state of complacency perdure in EFL, where we neither train our teachers nor pay any heed to local demands regarding materials and curriculum design? What will happen when other languages - viz German - begin to muscle into the European language mart?

How long will ... ?

- Aw, come on!

(Acknowledgements to Bill Lee and Arthur Van Essen. The rest is all my own bile).

LETTER TO A TRAINEE FROM AN EX-STAMMERER
by Mario Rinvolucri, Pilgrims-Longman list consultant

Dear Pre-service or "Initial" trainee,

As you take/teach your first classes it may interest you to hear how a speech therapist deals with stammering children and the sort of advice she gives their main language teachers, for much progress can be made in normal teaching procedures by looking at good ways of coping with parallel pathological ones.

On Correction Ann Irwin writes: "In the clinic where I work, I think the hardest thing for parents to accept, in the early stages of therapy, is that all 'correction' has to stop. They think I am asking them to give up the one thing that actually stops, or frequently stops the stammer."

She goes on to explain why correction is counter-productive:

"When parents begin to correct the child for stammering, he does not even know there is anything wrong with his speech. He keeps getting 'corrected' for something he has done: what he has done may be a mystery to him, but as the 'correction' continues, he gradually becomes aware of what it is he is doing and of which his parents disapprove. He thus begins to try not to do it and, in the effort of trying, the tension increases, stress about speaking develops and the stammer symptoms increase in frequency and severity."

Irwin's aim is to prevent the child being put in the situations that create his need/ability to stammer. (Yes, to verbally trip over the same consonants/vowels regularly over a period of weeks is not something that you, gentle trainee, can do effectively, unless you belong to the 1% of adults capable of stammering. Stammering is not something morally consciously controlable, so mediaeval attempts to drive the devil out with emetics and Victorian face-slapping and confinement in solitary rooms never did much good.)

Parental questions

Irwin points out that there is a big difference between volunteered speech and demanded speech. "Everytime you ask the child a question, he had got to reply, so asking questions is a pressure on speech."

Look at the pressure of this lot:

Have you had a nice day?

Did you eat your dinner?

What did you have for dinner?

What did you do today?

Was Mark at nursery today?

Have you forgotten anything to bring home?

Shall we go shopping?

Would you like some sweets?

Odd that most classrooms resound with demanded speech, prompted by parental-style teacher questions. In the F. language classroom this can certainly constitute pressure on speech. Odd too that most classrooms are filled with the voice of the teacher correcting.

Don't interrupt - Welcome interruptions

Here Ann Irwin is again speaking to the parents of stammering children:

"In discussing the speech pressure of interrupting I am going to ask you not only to stop interrupting the child but also to allow him to interrupt you."

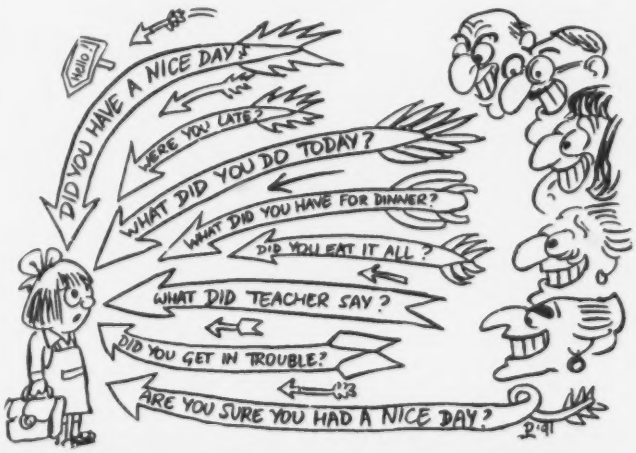
She points out that it is especially important not to interrupt a child when they are talking to themselves. "Children often live little parts of their lives in a world of fantasy and they talk to themselves, completely fluently, as they act out whatever is in their minds. In these moments of creativity and fluency it would be completely unjustified to break the spell."

Is Irwin only speaking to the parents of stammering kids?

Give the child attention

Ann writes: "When we speak we want the person to whom we are speaking to listen to what we are saying. If the listener's attention wanders we become aware that what we are saying is not interesting enough to hold his attention. Not a pleasant feeling. The stammering child has added difficulties because he is likely to become less fluent if he does not feel free to express himself without being in any way harried or embarrassed. Inattention, half attention or attention lost halfway through his conversation are likely to decrease his self-confidence and increase his stammer."

Have you ever watched language teachers on video who are clearly paying no attention to


HELLO!!
DID YOU HAVE A NICE DAY?
WERE YOU LATE?
WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?
WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR DINNER?
DID YOU EAT IT ALL?
WHAT DID TEACHER SAY?
DID YOU GET IN TROUBLE?
ARE YOU SURE YOU HAD A NICE DAY?

the content of what the students are saying to them but are simply hovering in the sky to swoop on rodent-like mistakes?

Pronunciation and Grammar

In her chapter on this area of speech development Irwin expresses a realistic, coherent, humanistic philosophy for the foreign language classroom:

"The child should be allowed to learn language at his own rate and not be subjected to the pressure of being required to make certain sounds, say certain words, or put words into a particular sequence. Usually normal speech and language will develop spontaneously, given that the child has enough simple language to listen to, and a warm and loving environment in which he enjoys speaking."

I wish I always achieved that sort of atmosphere in my classroom and training room. And you?

I was attracted to Ann Irwin's Stammering in Young children - a practical self-help programme for parents, Thorsons, 1988, because I stammered quite badly around the age of ten. The stammer was almost certainly brought on by my main primary teacher who lost patience with my mistakes and regularly flew off the handle. The situation was made worse because he was also my Dad and we were in a one-to-one situation.

If your trainer will let you, why not follow some of these Irwin precepts in your practice teaching. Careful how you go, though: you don't want to fail your observed TP by doing too many common-sensical things.

Cheers,

Mario

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MORE HURDLES - BECOMING A TEACHER TRAINER

by Ruth Wajnryb

This article is a sequel to another, called Hurdles and Histories (published in The Teacher Trainer, Vol 2, No. 3, 1988) which looked at some of the obstacles that face the beginning language teacher. More Hurdles looks at the problems that face beginning teacher trainers.

The background

More Hurdles is being written at the completion of a training course for trainers of which I was the course director. This was a first-of-its-kind course in Australia, a programme of 22 hours which extended over a six week period. The course covered a range of topics, including input styles, approaches to presentation, process options, teacher assessment, observation and feedback, training and counselling for a support teacher. Many of the sessions involved pre and/or post sessional reading. There were both practical and written components in the assessment, and part of the course requirement was the presentation of a reflection journal by each course parti-cipant. A second course is planned to begin soon.

The journal served a purpose outside of the reflective value it offered the participants. It also allowed me an insight into the impact of various strands of the course on each participant and served to guide me in the re-evaluation I am currently carrying out in preparation for the second course. The quotations included in this article come from these journals and are used with the participants' permission.

What obstacles does a beginning teacher trainer have to overcome? In pondering this question reflectively during and at the end of the trainers' course, I tend to think that, just as with the beginning teacher, there are a number of hurdles that face the beginning trainer, hurdles that need reflection and consideration in order to enjoy resolution.

1. Hurdle 1: a confident "sense of self" as the experienced teacher takes on the role of teacher trainer:

A common and oft-expressed feeling among the participants on the trainers' course was the lack of confidence they felt as they began to tackle the issues that are of relevance to a trainer.

One wrote:

> "Overall I feel like I've got very little confidence in myself as a potential teacher trainer. Have I really got the experience or skills necessary?"

Another said:

> "I know I am an achiever ... but it's in the confidence department where I'm lacking".

MORE HURDLES - BECOMING A TEACHER TRAINER cont'd

In a similar vein, another wrote:

> "Have I got confidence in myself as a trainer? In other fields we would be considered too "young" to become "masters". Aren't I still honing my own classroom skills? ... Isn't it a bit presumptuous ... people trying to fly before they've grown wings?"

This last participant seems to feel that one ought not become a trainer until one has perfected oneself as a teacher. Yet surely, perfecting one's skills is a life-long task, and becoming a trainer is one way by which this process can be enhanced! In other words, extending her metaphor, the wings might grow when there is a perceived need to fly.

Another participant addressed the question of confidence differently: "Obviously we must all be reasonably happy with our own competence as teachers or we wouldn't have applied for this course, but the role of teacher trainer must require more than that, and it's this elusive 'x' factor that I'd like to try and pin down".

The notion of confidence was raised again when, as part of a task, we were searching for the most appropriate name: support teacher? master teacher, co-operating teacher? The participants, much as I expected, unanimously rejected "master" as sexist, power-hungry, ego-tripping and offensive. But they also rejected the term because they felt it implied a level of expertise that they are worried about claiming for themselves.

My argument was that while "supportive" was certainly the key word to describe a prime function of a trainer, it does not have to co-exist with a false humilty about or even a denial of one's own expertise. One can be "supportive" while also being "expert". Indeed, I would contend, the trainee looks to the "expertise" as much as to the "support" of the trainer as part of their own learning process.

Participants were worried that the term "master teacher" inferred an inequality between trainer and trainee. I feel that just because a power gap exists it does not follow that it is to be abused, nor that "abuse" equates with an acknowledgement of one's own expertise.

One participant wrote in her journal: "But really, what's in a name? A bit of a long-winded discussion I thought. We could have spent our time more profitably on something more worthwhile".

The issue of confidence appeared and reappeared a number of times through the course, touching both the confidence of the beginning trainer and that of the beginning teacher. Indeed, as beginning trainers, the participants were particularly empathetic to the stresses and strains of beginning teachers. One participant wrote the following entry in her journal:

> "For the first time I began to remember what it was like to know nothing about language teaching. I reflected on how my skills and abilities as a teacher have developed. A fairly clear pattern began to emerge: the more confident I became the more open I became and then I started to take risks and experiment and develop."

2. Hurdle 2: the importance of "process" in training.

I sense that many prospective trainers come to a trainer training course expecting (consciously or sub-consciously) to "receive" an up-grading of their knowledge of the major topic areas of relevance to TESOL. In other words, they come wanting the theoretical background and underpinning that will lend breadth and depth to their practical classroom expertise - and perhaps (linking up to Hurdle 1) give them credibility in their own eyes.

One participant wrote in her first journal entry:

> "Do I know enough? Will this course provide me with what I don't know?"

Another expressed it this way:

> "Although I didn't have any really definitive preconceptions about the nature of this course, I suppose I thought there'd be more what to get across than there has been ... but the essence of this course is how to get across to trainees."

In a way, it is analogous to the teacher trainee's arriving on a teacher training course expecting to do a crash course in grammar, but instead discovering that that area was, in the main, left up to the trainee to work on and discover for herself, while the

real "meat" of the course looked at how people learn a language and how best a language teacher can help that process.

One participant saw the analogy:

> "You don't go into a classroom and give learners all the grammar you know; you just have it there at your disposal for when you (or they) need it. This reminds me of something my school principal used to say - 'wear your education like a watch, girls: only take it out when you need to know the time'."

For me, trainer training is a question of looking again at how people learn - this time, not how people learn languages but how people learn to be teachers. So, the emphasis is on the "how" not the "what", on process and means, rather than content.

And just as in the school of communicative language learning, we believe that gift-wrapped parcels of knowledge about language usage is **not** what language learning is all about, so too in learner-centred teacher training, do I believe that the gift-wrapped solution is not the way to go. And this brings us logically to Hurdle 3.

3. Hurdle 3: the realisation that strategies and solutions are arrived at through experience and reflection.

I often felt that what the participants were wanting from me was neat solutions to recurring problems. I sensed their frustration when instead of answers, I raised questions; instead of solutions, I pointed to problem areas.

One journal entry said:

> "when I look through my notes I feel as though I've got so many unanswered questions".

But there are no glossy, easy solutions to the problems that confront a trainer - no "best way" to do anything, no prescriptions, no formulae.

I concede that I am a little torn here: perhaps the need of the beginning trainer is comparable to that of the pre-service trainee wanting survival techniques and only years later coming back to ask more questions. Perhaps the beginning trainer needs a survival kit which they will come to embellish and refine through years of their own experience.

One participant wrote:

> "I feel we only just have enough time to scratch at the issues of teacher training. I want more. Something solid I can hold onto".

(See also R. Bowers article in Volume 3 No. 2)

We all know of the frustration of the language learners who expect a top-down, deductive traditional approach to grammar, and then discover themselves in a communicative, learner-centred environment. It is a similar frustration that trainee trainers discover when they realise that the curriculum is a task-based one and the aproach experiential and learner-centred. The answers only come when the questions are fully explored, and then they only work for that trainer in a particular context with a particular trainee. Too many particulars from which to draw hard and fast generalisations. At best we can have guiding principles.

As if validating discovery learning, one participant mused in her journal reflections:

> "Often you feel you know things but as you investigate you realise that the concept is familiar but the detail isn't. The detail is important".

Occasionally Hurdles No. 1 and 2 marry, as in the following comment in a journal:

> "Perhaps the reason I've been feeling not quite satisfied is that, because so much of what we arrive at in our sessions has been produced by us, it seems somehow to be not quite as important."

This participant went on to reflect on her own learning style:

> "I'm aware of myself looking for new ideas, insights, knowledge given to me from outside or beyond my experience ... I'd get more from getting an assortment of ideas from someone who's been through it all ... than from hypothetical discussions with similarly inexperienced peers".

What sometimes seems like pooled ignorance is in fact the struggles that go on when a group of prospective trainers search together for answers to common problems.

One participant was very aware of this:

> "We must find our own ways of dealing with (problems that emerge with individual trainees). As always, these 'tangential' discussions are the ones that get us most fired up. It's as if we need a course that can respond totally to things as they arise ... the ultimate learner-centred time allocation ... wouldn't it be wonderful?"

Another participant wrote in her final reflections on the course:

> "I am pleased that it is all over now - though I wonder if I've emerged much different. Am I a teacher trainer now? I don't really feel like one".

In her last journal entry, another participant wrote:

> "Well, it's all over. No, it hasn't really begun yet".

A fitting place for this hurdle - as well as this article - to end.

Meet A Colleague

Valeria Shadrova lives in Leningrad and works at The Electrical Engineering Institute there. She teaches English to under- and post-graduate students and also gives lectures to and consults with the teachers of English who come to the Institute for refresher courses from all parts of the country. Below she tells us about her work.

" Teachers in higher education in this country usually go through some kind of refresher course at least once every five years. The big cities like Moscow, Lenigrad, Kiev have centres for in-service or full-time teacher training. Our institute is one of these centres. Just to give an example curriculum, our four month course includes items such as:

> A survey of modern teaching methods, Translation, ESP, Testing, Colloquial English, Work in Language Laboratories, The Psychology of Adult Learners, Culture, History and Education in the UK, etc.

The trainees are from 25 to 50 years old. Their language skills are brushed up in oral practice sessions with teachers who have recently been in England and via listening to tapes and translation practice.

In teaching translation I start off with some universal things, e.g. the fact that due to differences in semantic structures of corresponding words in any two languages, there exist different types of semantic correlation i.e. full or partial correlation. But there are always some words in the source language that have no equivalents in the target language due to various reasons, an example, absence of corresponding realia, or absence of a special name, etc. We consider this case in more detail as it is the most interesting and the most difficult for translation. Trainees are taught different ways to deal with such cases - transliteration (as in 'perestroika'), translation loan (as in 'collective farm') and descriptive translation.

As well as the main programme, each trainee chooses two subjects of special interest for her/him. Example topics have been "Pair Work", "Teaching scanning-reading", "Independent work in the language lab". The trainees work at their topics individually, read-ing and then consulting a tutor. Twice a term they have mini-conferences where each participant reports on the results of her/his research. We find this round-table discussion very useful and stimulating.

We meet the trainees twice a week and so you soon begin to feel the mood of the group. Some individuals are active and outspoken while others are shy and reserved. But I must say that when it comes to discussing practical problems in teaching, everyone becomes involved!

We keep in touch with some of the trainees after the end of the course - by correspondence and by inviting them to our annual conference on methodology. We are also sometimes invited to their colleges to share experiences and give talks on specific problems in TEFL.

The training programme is revised practically every year. For example, a new course on psychology or social studies may be added. The number of days for independent work was recently increased from two to three. It also depends on the staff - new people come. Besides, every teacher knows that he/she may have a 'second-timer' in the group (that is, a trainee who was here a few years ago), so there is a constant impetus to update the course, supply it with new information.

What I find most interesting in my every-day work is the possibility to experiment, to supply future professionals with a key to useful information, and to get a cultural message, about the UK, through. To be more specific, it's getting to learn, with years of practice, how to make difficult things simple. But above all, it is the feeling of novelty that you experience when meeting new people and trying new ways and approaches.

What is difficult is the lack of adequate support material, good books which are both comprehensive and challenging for the intellect. Together with my colleagues, I made an attempt to make up for this somehow. The outcome is a reader for students of electronics to be published in 1991.

I am lucky to be able to keep in touch with language teaching via my work with undergraduates which I enjoy very much. My students are in the 17-23 age group and most of them want to learn English. We only have 2, 3 or 4 hours of English a week and so we have to make the learning process more effective by working out self-study programmes and making tapes available. To establish better student to teacher feedback I recently prepared a questionnaire, together with a student who is mad about learning languages!

In fact, there was a set of 3 questionnaires intended for junior, intermediate and senior students, each containing 10 to 12 questions. The aim was to probe the consistency of students' motivation in learning a foreign language, changes in goals and preferences, percentage of those who are mostly interested in oral communication, or more inclined to look upon a language as a key to scientific information, or those who are eager to combine both approaches.

As for myself, I am 46. In 1980 I got a degree for a thesis devoted to the problem of scientific notions and their verbal equivalents, in other words, an investigation of how ideas are reflected in language.

I have a "mine is a long tale" feeling now, so I'll stop! "

.....

If anybody would like to write to Valeria about any aspect of her work please send your letters in the first instance to the Editor.

TRAINER BACKGROUND

TRAINING TEACHERS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH

Bill Reed, M.A., Vice Principal, Western Language Centre

The desire of many EFL course providers to branch out into the Business English market has created something of a training gap. Directors of Studies and teacher-trainers are faced with the task of developing teachers' competence in the skills required for teaching business people. Standard EFL training of the Royal Society of Arts Certificate and Diploma type does not fully meet this need.

My impression is that one basic assumption of much mainstream EFL teaching is that the teacher will identify a "chunk" of language to be taught and, having checked the group's level and previous knowledge, will present the language to be taught, practise it in a controlled way, and then maybe devise an exercise in which the group will be asked to use this language in a "freer" way. Then the teacher will go on to the next chunk and repeat the cycle. One might imagine the teacher as a bottle containing the milk of language knowledge, pouring it into the student who is a jug. Unfortunately, the jug is cracked and leaky, and a fair amount of milk gets spilt in the process, so when the jug is tilted much less comes out than was orginally in the bottle.

This process puts considerable stress on the teacher, to know what to teach and how, to control the process permanently, and to deal with the remedial activity of mopping up (and crying over) the spilt milk.

The process can also be demeaning to learners, who are not called on from the outset to apply their experience (other than language knowledge) to the matter in hand: the first opportunity to speak freely may well be only at the end when the "real work" has been done. Imagine how much more demeaning to the 45 year old marketing executive who may be less willing to play the role of the "pupil", and on whose experience of work the success of the whole course depends.

The first need therefore in Business English is to find ways of discovering the knowledge of the world of work that course participants bring with them, and exploiting this to develop the required language skills. The appropriate analogy might be of the "loaves and fishes", where the meagre scraps of language brought by the learner are somehow multiplied by being used in the context of their real experience, with greater language ability resulting from effective handling by the teacher.

This can be done even at a low level. Ask a group of business people "What do managers do?" and you will likely end up with a board full of verbs. Your problems will be what to do with the language they have given you: not what they do with the language you have given them. You could ask them to group the words in categories; identify which of the things they do personally; give a personal example of each; reduce the whole board to a list of half-a-dozen headings; and so on. The point of this is that, contrary to popular belief, teachers do not need to know all the answers. They ony need to know the questions, and then have strategies for dealing with the answers. If the questions are applicable to a wide range of business people, then the matter of whether you are dealing with an engineer or a lawyer can take second place. In other words, it is important to identify themes which are common to business people, rather than concentrate on (and possibly be misled by) their professional specialisation. In this way, you can easily find that what you learn one week in teaching a marketing manager can be useful the next week in teaching an optician.

How, then, does one find the questions? One way to do this is to consider the level of work responsibility of the course participant. Four overlapping levels suggest themselves:

1. The "doers". These might be technicians or operators concerned principally with the performance of their own task. Relevant questions here might concern processes, and probing questions to elicit process details will be a good challenge. How do you make toothpaste?

2. Supervisors or junior managers. They are likely to have "doer" knowledge (perhaps their job before promotion?) but also a rather different range of concerns: leading a team, motivating people, being an interface with management and so on. Patterns of communication could be a good starting point. Who talks to who? About what?
A familiar example at this level would be a Director of Studies in an EFL school.

TRAINING TEACHERS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH cont'd

3. Middle management. In addition to the themes already mentioned, people at this level are likely to have a strong interest in aspects of their organisation which go beyond their own work. The structure of the company (in the shape of a formal organigram, or an informal network of relationships, see Fig. 1.) and its culture (the myths and legends prevalent in the company, how people dress and speak to each other etc.) are useful areas to explore.

4. Top management. At the top, managers are likely to be just as concerned with the world outside the company as with the world inside it. The social, technical, economic, political and legal factors affecting business in general, as well as their own sphere, are often major concerns. It is primarily at this level that articles from the business press come into their own, for teaching purposes.

An initial concentration on themes like these does not mean that grammar structures, for example, will be neglected. The description of processes is often an excellent exercise for introducing and practising the present simple. A discussion of communication patterns in an organisation can be a framework for conditionals, (e.g. "I'm responsible for this, if my boss is away") or for function work such as cause-and-effect, (e.g. "Revision of production dates by senior management means we have to review overtime requirements.").

It is useful therefore to devise exercises which will uncover and exploit people's real work experience, using concepts which are common to a wide range of individuals. Thus while it might not be much use bringing a lengthy article from The Economist on the marketing of yoghurt to a class consisting of a secretary, a production engineer and a lawnmower salesman, a theme which might well unite them would be,the processes they use and observe in their work. Focusing on the language of how people do things rather than of what they do is often more productive.

One can also find themes which cut across boundaries. In her book "Choices for Managers", (see Ref. 1.) Rosemary Stewart, a management researcher, represents the work of any manager as a collection of demands (those things which must be done), choices (those areas where a manager has a degree of discretion about what to do, or how to do it), and constraints (the limits to the manager's authority or scope).

Fig. 1 DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIGRAM

These headings are easy to present and understand, and can provide the basis for individual preparation (making some notes on how the headings apply to an individual's job), pairwork (exchanging the information) mini-presentation work (presenting a brief outline of one's job to the group) and grammar structure work (practice and correction of modal verbs). Once again we have started with the experience of the individual, practised informally (pairwork) and formally (presentation), and only then focused on the language work as such, once the teacher knows (from the early stages of the process) where the best examples are to be found, and what needs to be fed in, clarified or corrected.

In the foregoing I have aimed to show that the work experience of business people can be used to good effect even at lower levels of language ability, if a new approach is taken to lesson planning.

At higher levels, a "case study" approach is useful. This normally consists of a text describing a situation or a problem in an organisation, which course participants are asked to analyse and propose solutions for, as if they were management consultants. Thus participants use their own knowledge and judgement in making their recommendations, and in this way a case study is different from a role-play, where participants will be required to take on a personage which is not their own. It is also different from a simulation, in that nothing happens as a result of the recommendations: the process stops once they have been presented.

The obvious source of useable case studies is certain business English books. (See Ref. 2 onwards). However, many case studies designed for management training can be adapted for language teaching purposes; and some articles in the business press are small case studies in themselves. A case study approach can also be used with items from the business programmes on radio and television.

A lesson plan for dealing with a case study might go as follows. First, participants are asked to read (or view, or listen to) the item chosen. Let us say it is about the problems facing a company. They are then asked (individually, or in pairs or groups) to prepare what management specialists call a SWOT analysis: a list of the Strengths and Weaknesses inherent in the company; a list of the external Opportunities the company could exploit, and Threats it must overcome or minimise. Another analysis which may be appropriate is the STEP: this refers to the environment within which the company exists, and, in particular, is Social, Technological, Economic and Political (and legal) aspects.

These analyses aim to define (as far as one can tell from the information available)

the company's present situation. The next stage is to discuss and decide on some recommendations to improve the position. This is where the teacher will need some knowledge of good business practice in order to structure the necessary groupwork or discussion. The most accessible case studies for language teachers are often those which primarily involve human, rather than technical, questions. Therefore, it is useful to have a background knowledge of some theories relevant to people at work: for example, the principles of good job design, or motivation at work, or the questions involved in managing change. This knowledge will enable the teacher to facilitate the recommendation-making stage.

Training in the use of case studies is important if the teacher is to use them as a structured activity with clear outcomes, rather than just as a prop for a conversation lesson.

In management training it is common practice for a group completing a case study to present its findings formally, often using visual aids. This brings us to another essential facet of business English teaching: the communication skills needed by managers.

It is not the role of the business English teacher to tell people how to do their jobs. But the teaching itself must take place within a realistic and credible context, and so the circumstances in which learners need to use their English at work needs to be considered. Presenting information formally, chairing and participating in meetings, telephoning and conducting negotiations are amongst the most frequently-cited reasons why business people need English. It is not enough for the teacher to set up a presentation, say, and just take notes on the vocabulary and grammar mistakes made, in order to provide "correction" afterwards. At least two other skills are required: firstly, an awareness of what makes a good presentation, in any language: voice projection, correct use of visual aids, structuring and body language will all come into this. There is little point concentrating on correction of grammar if the presenter is only going to address the ceiling in a whisper. Personal behaviour is central, so the second skill needed is an ability to provide feedback in a constructive, rather than a demotivating way. Teachers commonly use video cameras, but how many of them know how to use the recording effectively for feedback?

Although the details will be different, the same type of requirement exists in teaching telephoning or meetings skills, or in setting up and using a negotiation situation for language teaching purposes.

To summarise: trainers of business English teachers need to take the following into account:

1. Ways in which teachers can plan lessons to draw on the work experience of their course participants.

2. The "case study" approach and its application to a wide variety of items.

3. The communication skills needed by learners, and effective ways of providing feedback.

I must stress three points in conclusion.

Firstly, the role of the business English teacher should never be to teach people how to do their jobs. However, an awareness of the background to people's work is essential.

Secondly, it should not be forgotten that teachers and teacher-trainers are themselves managers of people, of resources, of time and space, and of learning. The world of management is not foreign terrain.

Finally, the business English market is perceived to be lucrative, and growing. As a result it is becoming highly competitive, and only those organisations which are able to make a full commitment to the training of their teaching staff are likely to be successful in the long term.

References

1. Stewart, R. (1983) Choices for Managers McGraw Hill Pubs.

2. The following books contain useful mini case studies:

Flamholtz & Randal (1989) The Inner Game of Management Business Books.

Hardy, C. (1985) Understanding Organisations Penguin.

Young, A. (1986) The Manager's Handbook Sphere Pubs. ISBN 0-7221-5754-1

It may also be possible to gain access to case studies from Cranfield Case Clearing House, Cranfield Institute of Technology, Cranfield, Bedford, MK43 OAL - Tel: 0234-750903.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

Ways of communicating Edited by D.H. Mellor (1991) CUP ISBN 0-521-37074-4. A selection of essays originating from the 1989 Darwin College Lectures on communication. A physiologist, an ethnologist, a linguist, philosopher, novelist, engineer, composer and man of the theatre all present a view on one aspect of the topic e.g. animal communication, the novel as communication, communication without words, music as communication. The print is too small but a good book to dip into for little facts and ideas to spice up your input sessions.

The Inward Ear by A. Maley & A. Duff. (1989) CUP ISBN 0-521-31240-X. An application of EFL ideas - some standard (jumbled lines, predicting from a title), some not (writing out poems as prose and prose as poems) - to poems. The poems are chosen to be understood and appreciated without undue difficulty by foreign learners of English.

Writing for study purposes by A. Brookes & P. Grundy (1990) CUP ISBN 0-521-35853-1. This book on English for Academic Purposes sets writing firmly within a communicative approach using humanistic methodology. The process of writing for a purpose, for a specific reader and for our own needs supplants the more conventional concentration on matching student writing to a notional ideal product. Recommended.

Models and metaphors in language teacher training by Tessa Woodward (1991) CUP ISBN 0-521-37773-0. A book about the process of training language teachers. Part One introduces in detail a strategy called 'loop input', and is highly practical. Part Two takes a reflective step back from training to consider the ways we can choose to respond to training variables. Lots of pictures and diagrams. Accessible style. Nice blue cover. I wrote it so, of course, I recommend it!

Conducting Interaction: Patterns of behaviour in focused encounters by A. Kendon (1990) CUP ISBN 0-521-38938-0. A collection of 5 classic studies of the organisation of behaviour in face-to-face interaction together with a historical and theoretical discussion of this natural history tradition of research. Deals with topics such as, 'functions of gaze direction in two-person conversation', 'functions of the face in a kissing round'. Small print, charts and statistics but fascinating to find out what can be learned with a camera, pencil and paper.

Vocabulary by M. McCarthy (1990) OUP ISBN 0-19-437136-0. One of the books in the "scheme for teacher education series", as usual broken up into three sections (what has been said already, what has been done, what you the teacher can do). Useful survey of main topics in vocabulary teaching and learning. Dotted with interesting tasks.

Mediating languages and cultures: Towards an Intercultural theory of foreign language education. Edited by D. Buttjes and M Byram. (1990) Multilingual Matters ltd. ISBN 1-85359-070-3. The view of this book is that language learning is not just a matter of acquiring linguistic structures and vocabulary but is about other people's ways of life and ways of thinking too. 21 essays on the integration of teaching culture and teaching language cover cultural studies debates in Scandinavia, Germany, Britain and France, stereotypes and their effect on pupil exchanges, cultural references in textbooks and some useful approaches to intercultural teacher education.

Children's Minds by Margaret Donaldson (1978) Fontana Pubs. ISBN 0-00-686122-9. Intelligent, caring criticism of some features of Piaget's theory of intellectual development. Donaldson argues that children are skilled thinkers and language users by the time they get to school. There they meet different modes of thinking. Exceptionally clear analysis of the underpinnings of much of our present day thought about the development of the human mind!

Vygotsky's psychology: A biography of ideas by Alex Kozulin (1990) Harvester Wheatsheaf. ISBN 0-7450-0852-6. An interesting biography to read after the book above (since Vygotsky was a contemporary of Freud and Piaget). The first comprehensive account of V's theories and their relationship to Russian and Western intellectual culture in the twentieth century. But a highbrow and slightly inaccessible read.

Source book for teaching English overseas by M. Lewis & J. Hill (1981) Heinemann ISBN 435-28992-6. The book is intended for native English speakers going abroad to work as assistants for a year, mainly helping out with "conversation classes". Covers the selection, preparation and use of material as well as some teaching techniques, drills, games, discussions, register and translation. Would be useful too, with adaptation, to people having foreign students to stay in their homes, one-to-one teachers, inexperienced teachers working on holiday courses at Easter, summer etc.

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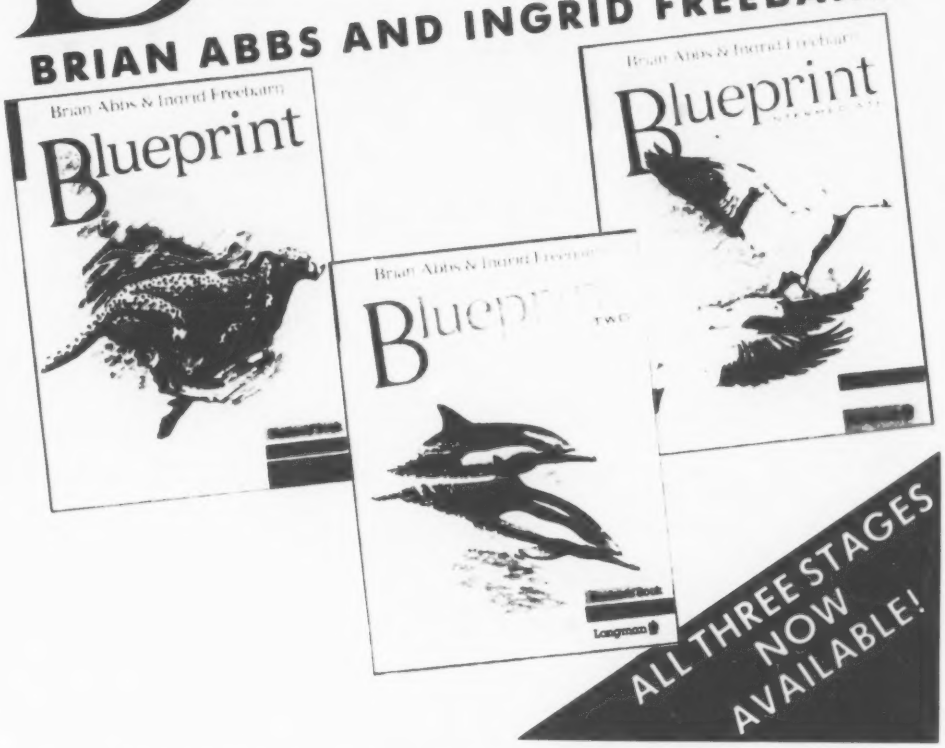

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume five Number three

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Trainer background, Observation and feedback and Publications received.

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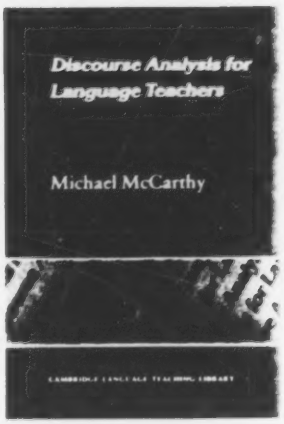
Michael McCarthy



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THE TEACHER TRAINER

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EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the last issue of Volume Five. We have taken on a little more advertising in this issue in order to finance a free, informal index to the first five volumes of The Teacher Trainer. We hope that the index, nicknamed "The story so far ....." and enclosed in this issue will be helpful to you when you're search -ing in your copies for an old article you liked or when you have some time to read around one topic in particular.

Our lead article this time comes from Jack Richards now working in Hong Kong. He writes about teachers reflecting on their "style" (the repertoire of teaching strategies which they draw on in their teaching). On an equally democratic, developmental theme is Kari Smith's article on encouraging or allowing teachers in training to take on some responsibility for their own assessment.

The games series continues with another idea from Sara Walker. This time it involves role play and is designed to encourage consider -ation of teaching tasks and teacher/student roles.

We welcome back Barbara Garside who has written for the journal before. In this issue she shares with us her idea of abandonning teaching practice points on pre-service courses. Also on the topic of pre-service courses Kate Pearce joins us for the first time, with some thoughts on the very high cost of failing them.

As usual we try to combine both short, practical ideas and more reflective thoughtful pieces. Mick Randall's article on using algorithms in teacher training falls into the practical category. Tom Hutchinson falls under the longer-term thoughtful category with his article on "The Management of Change". Those who were at the IATEFL Special Interest Group symposium in January 1991 will recognise this article as a synopsis of Tom's presentation there.

The Teacher Trainer regularly runs series on different themes. Not all themes appear in each issue. In this issue we welcome back:

Observation and Feedback Martin Parrott discusses the deep, individual "blocks" that a teacher may have about such matters as control or discipline and how a sensitive observer can encourage the teacher to work on these.

Trainer Background Linda Taylor looks at different ways that teachers can be helped to explain vocabulary. She breaks the explanations down into pre- and post-familiarisation and discusses the use of definition, synonymy and paraphrase.

Finally, Bryan Robinson gives us a useful framework for negotiating course content on short, intensive, in-service courses. I've just tried it out and it worked for me too!

Thanks as usual to all those who type, cartoon, paste-up, print and stuff the journal - and of course to you too who support it.

I really hope you enjoy this issue!

Tessa Woodward
Editor.

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

TOWARDS REFLECTIVE TEACHING

by Jack C Richards,
Department of English,
City Polytechnic of Hong Kong

Most teachers develop their classroom skills fairly early in their teaching careers. Teachers entering the profession may find their initial teaching efforts stressful, but with experience they acquire a repertoire of teaching strategies which they draw on throughout their teaching. The particular configuration of strategies a teacher uses constitute his or her "teaching style". While a teacher's style of teaching provides a means of coping with many of the routine demands of teaching, there is also a danger that it can hinder a teacher's professional growth. How can teachers move beyond the level of automatic or routinized responses to classroom situations and achieve a higher level of awareness of how they teach, of the kinds of decisions they make as they teach, and of the value and consequences of particular instructional decisions? One way of doing this is through observing and reflecting on one's own teaching, and using observation and reflection as a way of bringing about change. This approach to teaching can be described as "Reflective Teaching", and in this paper I want to explore how a reflective view of teaching can be developed.

What is reflection?

Reflection or "critical reflection", refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. It is a response to past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basic for evaluation and decision-making and as a source for planning and action. Bartlett (1990) points out that becoming a reflective teacher involves moving beyond a primary concern with instructional techniques and "how to" questions and asking "what" and "why" questions that regard instructions and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes.

> Asking "what and why" questions gives us a certain power over our teaching. We could claim that the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control we can exercise over our actions. In reflecting on the above kind of questions, we begin to exercise control and open up the possibility of trans-forming our everyday classroom life.
>
> Bartlett, 1990. 267.

How does reflection take place?

Many different approaches can be employed if one wishes to become a critically reflective teacher, including observation of oneself and others, team teaching, and exploring one's view of teaching through writing. Central to any approach used however is a three part process which involves:

Stage 1 The event itself

The starting point is an actual teaching episode, such as a lesson or other instructional event. While the focus of critical reflection is usually the teacher's own teaching, self-reflection can also be stimulated by observation of another person's teaching.

Stage 2 Recollection of the event

The next stage in reflective examination of an experience is an account of what happened, without explanation or evaluation. Several different procedures are available during the recollection phase, including written descriptions of an event, a video or audio recording of an event, or the use of check lists or coding systems to capture details of the event.

Stage 3 Review and response to the event

Following a focus on objective description of the event, the participant returns to the event and reviews it. The event is now processed at a deeper level, and questions are asked about the experience.

Let us examine approaches to critical reflection which reflect these processes.

Peer Observation

Peer observation can provide opportunities for teachers to view each others' teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles and to provide opportunities for critical reflection on their own teaching. In a peer observation project initiated in our own department, the following guidelines were developed.

1. Each participant would both observe and be observed.

   Teachers would work in pairs and take turns observing each others' classes.

2. Pre-observation orientation session.

Prior to each observation, the two teachers would meet to discuss the nature of the class to be observed, the kind of material being taught, the teachers' approach to teaching, the kinds of students in the class, typical patterns of interaction and class participation, and any problems that might be expected. The teacher being observed would also assign the observer a goal for the observation and a task to accomplish. The task would involve collecting information about some aspect of the lesson, but would not include any evaluation of the lesson. Observation procedures or instruments to be used would be agreed upon during this session and a schedule for the observations arranged.

3. The observation.

The observer would then visit his or her partner's class and complete the observation using the procedures that both partners had agreed on.

4. Post-observation.

The two teachers would meet as soon as possible after the lesson. The observer would report on the information that had been collected and discuss it with the teacher (Richards and Lockhart, 1991).

The teachers identified a variety of different aspects of their lessons for their partners to observe and collect information on. These included organization of the lesson, teacher's time management, students' performance on tasks, time-on-task, teacher questions and student responses, student performance during pairwork, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, and students' use of the first language or English during group work.

The teachers who participated in the project reported that they gained a number of insights about their own teaching from their colleague's observations and that they would like to use peer observation on a regular basis. They obtained new insights into aspects of their teaching. For example:

> "It provided more detailed information on student performance during specific aspects of the lesson than I could have gathered on my own."
>
> "It revealed unexpected information about interaction between students during a lesson."
>
> "I was able to get useful information on the group dynamics that occur during group work."

Some teachers identified aspects of their teaching that they would like to change as a result of the information their partner collected. For example:

▶▶

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Please support "The Teacher Trainer"! It's the only publication existing solely as a forum for the modern language teacher trainer.

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.....

.....

TOWARDS REFLECTIVE TEACHING cont'd

> "It made me more aware of the limited range of teaching strategies that I have been using."
>
> "I need to give students more time to com -plete some of the activities I use."
>
> "I realized that I need to develop better time management strategies."

Longer term benefits to the department were also sighted:

> "It helped me develop better a working relationship with a colleague."
>
> "Some useful broader issues about teaching and the programme came up during the post-observation discussions"

Written accounts of experiences

Another useful way of engaging in the reflective process is through the use of written accounts of experiences. Personal accounts of experiences through writing are common in other disciplines (Powell 1985) and their potential is increasingly being recognized in teacher education. A number of different approaches can be used.

Self-Reports

Self-reporting involves completing an inventory or check list in which the teacher indicates which teaching practices were used within a lesson or within a specified time period and how often they were employed (Pak, 1985). The inventory may be completed individually or in group sessions. The accuracy of self reports is found to increase when teachers focus on the teaching of specific skills in a particular classroom context and when the self-report instrument is carefully constructed to reflect a wide range of potential teaching practices and behaviours (Richards, 1990).

Self-reporting allows teachers to make a regular assessment of what they are doing in the classroom. They can check to see to what extent their assumptions about their own teaching are reflected in their actual teaching prac -tices. For example a teacher could use self-reporting to find out the kinds of teaching activities being regularly used, whether all of the programme's goals are being addressed, the degree to which personal goals for a class are being met, and the kinds of activities which seem to work well or not to work well.

Autobiographies

Abbs (1974, cited in Powell 1985) discusses the use of autobiographies in teacher preparation. These consist of small groups of around 12 student teachers who meet

> for an hour each week for at least 10 weeks. During this period of time each student works at creating a written account of his or her educational experience and the weekly meetings are used to enable each person to read a passage from his or her autobiography so that it can be supported, commented upon by peers and the teacher (43).

Powell (1985) described the use of reaction-sheets - sheets student teachers complete after a learning activity has been completed - in which they are encouraged "to stand back from what they had been doing and think about what it meant for their own learning and what it entailed for their work as teachers of others" (p.46). I have used a similar technique in working with student teachers in a practicum. Students work in pairs with a co-operating teacher and take turns teaching. One serves as observer while the other teaches, and completes a reaction sheet during the lesson. The reaction sheet contains the following questions. What aspects of the lesson were most effective? What aspects of the lesson were least effective? Would you have taught any aspect of the lesson differently? Why? The student who teaches also completes his or her own reaction sheet after the lesson. Then the two compare their reactions to the lesson.

Journal Writing

A procedure which is becoming more widely acknowledged as a valuable tool for developing critical reflection is the journal or diary. The goal of journal writing is,

1. to provide a record of the significant learning experiences that have taken place.
2. to help the participant come into touch and keep in touch with the self-develop -ment process that is taking place for them.
3. to provide the participants with an opportunity to express, in a personal and dynamic way, their self-development.
4. to foster a creative interaction
   - between the participant and the self-development process that is taking place
   - between the participant and other participants who are also in the process of self-development
   - between the participant and the faci -litator whose role it is to foster such development

   (Powell, 1985, Bailey, 1990)

While procedures for diary keeping vary, the participant usually keeps a regular account of learning or teaching experiences, recording reflections on what he or she did as well as straightforward descriptions of events, which may be used as a basis for later reflection. The diary serves as a means for interaction between the writer, the facilitator, and sometimes other participants.

Collaborative Diary Keeping

A group of teachers may also collaborate in journal writing. A group of my colleagues recently explored the value of collaborative diary-keeping as a way of developing a critically reflective view of their teaching (Brock, Ju and Wong, 1991). Throughout a 10 week teaching term they kept diaries on their teaching, read each other's diaries, and discussed their teaching and diary keeping experiences on a weekly basis. They also recorded and later transcribed their group discussions and subsequently analyzed their diary entries, their written responses to each other's entries, and the transcripts of their discussions, in order to determine how these three interacted and what issues occured most frequently. They reported that:

> Collaborative diary-keeping brought several benefits to our development as second language teachers. It raised our awareness of classroom processes and prompted us to consider those processes more deeply than we may otherwise have. Collaborative diary-keeping also provided encouragement and support; it served as a source of teaching ideas and suggestions; and in some sense it gave us a way to observe one another's teaching from a "safe distance" ...
>
> By reading one another's diary entries, we were able to share our teaching experiences, and we often felt that we were learning as much from one another's entries as we were from our own. Reading and responding to the entries led us back to our own teaching to consider how and why we taught as we did.

These teachers observed however that

1. collaborative diary-keeping is more effective if the scope of issues considered is focussed more narrowly,

2. a large block of time is needed,

3. participants must be comfortable in sharing both pleasant and unpleasant experiences and be committed to gaining a clearer picture of their teaching and their classrooms.

Recording Lessons

For many aspects of teaching, audio or video recording of lessons can also provide a basis for reflection. While there are many useful insights to be gained from diaries and self-reports, they cannot capture the moment to moment processes of teaching. Many things happen simultaneously in a classroom, and some aspects of a lesson cannot be recalled. It would be of little value for example, to attempt to recall the proportion of Yes-No Questions to WH-Questions a teacher used during a lesson, or to estimate the degree to which teacher time was shared among higher and lower ability students. Many significant classroom events may not have been observed by the teacher, let alone remembered, hence the need to supplement diaries or self-reports with recordings of actual lessons.

At its simplest, a tape recorder is located in a place where it can capture the exchanges which take place during a lesson. With the microphone placed on the teacher's table, much of the teacher's language can be recorded as well as the exchanges of many of the students in the class. Pak (1985) recommends recording for a one or two week period and then randomly selecting a cassette for closer analysis. This recording could be used as the basis for an initial assessment. Where video facilities are available in a school, the teacher can request to have a lesson recorded, or with access to video equipment, students themselves can be assigned this responsibility. A 30 minute recording usually provides more than sufficient data for analysis. The goal is to capture as much of the interaction of the class as possible, both teacher to class and student to student. Once the initial novelty wears off, both students and teacher accept the presence of the technician with the camera, and the class proceeds with minimum disruption.

Conclusions

A reflective approach to teaching involves changes in the way we usually perceive teaching and our role in the process of teaching. As the examples above illustrate, teachers who explore their own teaching through critical reflection develop changes in attitudes and awareness which they believe can both benefit their professional growth as teachers, as well as improve the kind of support they provide their students. Like other forms of self-inquiry, reflective teaching is not without its risks, since journal writing, self-reporting or making recordings of lessons can be time consuming. However teachers engaged in reflective analysis of their own teaching report that it is a valuable tool for self-evaluation and professional growth. Reflective teaching suggests that experience alone is insufficient for professional growth, but that experience coupled with reflection can be a powerful impetus for teacher development.

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"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing and 46 characters a line. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

TEACHER TRAINING GAMES SERIES: GAME 6
by Sara Walker

For a full rationale of the use of games in teacher training and development, as well as for Games 1 and 2 in the start of this series, please see 'The Teacher Trainer', Volume 4, Number 3. More games in Sara Walker's series will appear in the next issue.

Objective: to consider different types of teaching task, and the roles of teacher and student in a number of different teaching situations.

Materials: one role card per trainee. One copy of the complete list of roles per trainee (or pair) for the discussion phase.

Method:

1. Hand out a numbered role card to each trainee, at random. Ask trainees to find their partners (Role 1A with Role 1B, etc.)
2. Ask trainees to dramatise their roles. When they have practised, some of them will be asked to present their role-play to the whole class.
3. Put the three Discussion questions (which are printed below the roles) on the blackboard, and ask trainees who finish early to discuss them in their pairs.

Teacher/student roles

1.A. You have just bought a large puppy and you know very little about dogs. You want to train your dog.

1.B. You have experience in training dogs. Advise A on how to train his/her puppy, and show him/her exactly what to do.

2.A. You are a child (about 11 years old) and you are scared of water. Your parents feel it is time you learnt to swim, and have arranged swimming lessons for you.

2.B. You are a swimming instructor. Help A to overcome his/her fear of water, and teach him/her to swim.

3.A. You don't know how to drive. You feel your life would be easier if you learnt.

3.B. You are a driving instructor. Teach A how to drive. Show him/her exactly what to do.

4.A. You are an illiterate adult. You had a hard life as a child, and you have never learnt to read and write. Now you are going to learn.

4.B. You have offered to teach A (an adult) to read and write. Excatly what do you do?

5.A. You are an adult. You don't have a very good sense of balance and you are rather uncoordinated. You want to learn to ride a bicycle. B. will teach you.

5.B. Your friend A wants you to teach him/her to ride a bicycle. Show him/her exactly what to do.

6.A. You are a new secretary in a language institute. A more experienced secretary will teach you how to use the electric typewriter or the computer.

6.B. You are an experienced secretary in a language institute. Teach A (your new colleague) how to use an electric typewriter.

7.A. You are going to live on your own and you have never done any cooking. Seek advice from B, who is a good cook.

7.B. You are a good cook. Teach A some simple recipes which will enable him/her to survive alone, and who him/her what to do.

8.A. You are a child of around 6 years old. You find numbers difficult and aren't very interested in them. You are having problems in kindergarten and your parents have asked a friend to teach you basic addition and subtraction.

8.B. Teach A (a child of around 6) the basics of addition and subtraction.

9.A. You have just joined the army. Your sergeant will instruct you what to do and how to behave.

9.B. You are an army sergeant. Instruct A (a new recruit) what to do and how to behave in the army.

10.A. A button has come off your blouse/shirt and you want to sew it back on. You don't know how.

10.B. Teach A how to sew a button onto his/her shirt/blouse. Show A exactly what to do.

11.A. You want to re-decorate your house, but you have no experience of plastering, painting etc. Ask B to teach you what to do.

11.B. You are an experienced do-it-yourself decorator. Advise A and show him/her how to paint, plaster, etc.

12.A. You are interested in music, but you cannot play any instrument. You have asked B to teach you.

12.B. Give A his/her first lesson in how to play a specific musical instrument (e.g. the piano, the guitar, etc.)

13.A. You have a new baby. You want to do everything you can to look after it yourself. You don't know how to bath your baby.

13.B. Show A exactly how to bath a baby.

Feedback: Ask volunteer pairs to act out their situation. Invite comments on the techniques required and the role of teacher and student in each situation.

Discussion:

a) Are there any factors in common in ALL teaching situations?

b) Are there any qualities/skills ALL teachers need?

c) Are there any procedures that can be applied to ALL teaching situations?

WHO READS "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

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THE CASE FOR NO "T.P. POINTS" ON RSA/UCLES CERTIFICATE COURSES

by Barbara Garside

We started running * RSA/UCLES Preparatory Certificate courses at the Stanton School of English, London, in August 1987. Ever since that time my colleagues and I have been debating with other tutors and assessors, as well as with each other - the need for "Teaching Practice points". (T.P. points) This is the name generally given to the items set by tutors and taught by trainees each day in the Teaching Practice with real language students. Examples of such items, which I have taken from courses, might be "Vocabulary: the parts of a car", "Developing the listening skill: Listening for specific information", or - later on in the course - ‡ "P.P.P. of past continuous interrupted".

The aim of this article is to show that T.P. points of this nature are not only unnecessary but that they may also be detrimental. I also aim to present an alternative approach to T.P. Before I do this, however, I shall list the arguments in favour of T.P. points, in note form.

Arguments in favour of giving trainees T.P. points

For tutors

1. They are easy to explain to trainees.
2. They are easy to control and keep a record of. (It is therefore easy to make sure that each trainee does a little bit of everything in their T.P.)
3. They reflect, in many cases, the syllabus of the school where the course is being run and thus are discrete item-based.

For trainees

1. They are easy to grasp.
2. They may help to give trainees a sense of progress i.e. a "building blocks" approach.
3. Trainees can concentrate on their own "slot".
4. Trainees can devote their attention to how to teach, rather than worrying also about what to teach.

* Royal Society of Arts/University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate - now combined

‡ Presentation, practice, production

The way we prepare for Teaching Practice

Despite the advantages stated above, the way we prepare for Teaching Practice at our school is as follows:

1. Lesson preparation is a group activity which takes place on a daily basis for at least one hour of the day.
2. It is a timetabled and essential part of the course.
3. T.P. groups themselves decide what is to be taught the following day and how. This involves all members, regardless of whether they are teaching or not.
4. These sessions are led by the T.P. tutor, whose role becomes less and less dominant as the course progresses.
5. At certain points in the course, the group plans a series of lessons rather than just the next day 's. This often involves cross-group information exchange about the students and what they have learnt so far.
6. As far as possible, lessons are prepared with the students' needs taking precedence over the trainees' needs.
7. The aims of the first class are for trainees and students to get to know each other, and for the trainees to diagnose the level and needs of the students. (See "The First Time a Teacher Teaches" by Tessa Woodward in The Teacher Trainer, Vol. 4, No.2).
8. Subsequent lessons - at least for the first two weeks of the course - are based on units of coursebooks. Trainees are encouraged to follow more or less the order suggested by the coursebook.
9. Each block of two hours has one overall aim, regardless of the number of "slots" it is divided into.
10. Of their two "whole" lessons (60 minutes), trainees should make sure that one is language-based and the other skills-based, but that each demonstrates "a range of techniques".

The Rationale behind this approach

Our aim in four weeks is to train people as far as possible to be autonomous teachers. In an EFL teacher's job, preparation is at least as important as execution, especially at the beginning of one's career. Preparing for such discrete and unconnected items as "Vocabulary: the parts of a car" or "P.P.P: past continuous interrupted" does little to help trainees in the long term. T.P. points of this nature encourage them to prepare little items of language or small sub-skills in isolation.

and give them little or no concept of how to stage a whole lesson or timetable a series of lessons.

Having to prepare in a group helps to develop skills such as listening to each other, negotiating and operating as part of a team. While these skills may not be essential to every teacher's job, it is generally helpful for teachers to develop a vocabulary with which to discuss classes effectively, and to learn to liaise. Group preparation also leads to a greater sense of cohesion between group members and puts the focus on the learners and the overall aims of the lesson rather than on each individual trainee's "performance". This focus is carried through into feedback, which naturally becomes a discussion of global issues, such as aims, pace, staging, flow, rather than an examination of the strong points and weak points of each slot. Group preparation also gives trainees more of a reason to observe dur-ing T.P., because the whole thing is seen as a co-operative effort, with each slot in some way dependent on the others.

When I finished my own four-week teacher training course many years ago, I felt able to do a mime story, to teach "there's a terrific spider up there", "I've got terrible toothache" and one page of a unit from Kernel Lessons Plus, and to present the second conditional. These were all the things I had done in T.P. But I had no idea of how this motley assortment of items might fit into a whole syllabus, or how I might adapt them to teach other things. Furthermore, since my course had encouraged me to prepare in isolation, I spent my first two teaching years sitting in the staffroom pretend-ing I knew what I was doing, too afraid to ask for help.

We hope that our approach to T.P. preparation not only gives trainees a more global understanding of the principles behind an activity, a lesson, a series of lessons, but also provides them with the skills and confidence they need to be able to discuss these with colleagues.

THE USE OF SELF-EVALUATION IN TEACHER TRAINING

by Kari Smith

BACKGROUND:

Recent trends in education favour the humanistic approach which puts a strong emphasis on the learner as the central core of the teaching-learning process. According to this view the learner (in our case - the trainee) is taken into consideration when the planning of the course takes place; the trainee's needs and interests and personal learning strategies are important during the course, and the trainee together with the trainer evaluates the course formatively and summatively. The trainee has become a responsible partner in the learning-process; not only by having to do what other people tell him/her to do, but also by stating his/her opinion when decisions have to be taken. The trainee ought to take over part of the responsibility for what and how he/she is learning. Knowles claims that

> "Active learners taking initiative learn more things and learn better than do people who sit at the feet of their teachers." (1975:14)

This responsibility is, however, not always used or taken seriously when it comes to the evaluation of the trainee him/herself. In most learning-situations the teachers and/or external evaluators have the final word regarding the assessment of the learner and his/her work during the course. The lack of responsibility in the evaluation-process stands in contradiction to the belief that the trainee is an equal partner in the learning-process, and the purpose of this paper is to argue that the trainee is capable of taking on the responsibility of the assessment of his/her own learning and achievements, provided that he/she has been directed in how to do so. If he/she is not the only evaluator, the trainee should at least be at the same responsibility level as the trainer and any eventual external evaluator.

VARIOUS USES OF SELF-EVALUATION

Self-evaluation has been found useful in various fields and for various reasons; for example, in situations where trainees are going to be future trainers and often also evaluators. It is based on the belief that in order to become able evaluators of other people, one must first be capable of evaluating oneself. This technique is often used by organizations like the army in training courses for future trainers of various jobs within the army; e.g. the training of future instructors of pilots. The trainees are provided with a detailed list of criteria decided on by the trainers as the mini-mum criteria for passing the course. The trainees have to relate to this list during and after an assignment. The detailed list helps the trainee to focus attention on the im-

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THE USE OF SELF-EVALUATION IN TEACHER TRAINING cont'd

portant parts of the task, and to disregard unnecessary details. Evaluation is simplified when the goals of the assignment are clearly stated. When the trainee finishes evaluating her/himself, the form is left for the trainer who can accept or change the self-evaluation grade. No official data has been collected on the correlation of the grades given by the trainees/trainers, but the overall impression is that there is a high correlation, and grades are not often changed by the trainers. A tendency is found among the weakest trainees to overevaluate themselves, and the reason is believed to be fear of being removed from the training course. This type of evaluation is used as formative evaluation taking place several times during the army course (personal communication).

However, not every teaching/learning situation lends itself to an approach of listing and grading criteria and goals. It is difficult to assess attitudes, an important part of teaching and other human relations professions. An attempt to solve this problem is found in the way self-evaluation is used in administration as an integral part of training and development programmes for people whose occupation is in management, sales and negotiations. Self-evaluation is used together with evaluation by others, and each source of evalua-tion provides important insights into the evaluation task. It is recommended that neither of the two types should be used by itself if the picture to be received should be a true one (Cooke, Rousseau and Laffert, 1987).

SELF-EVALUATION IN TEACHER TRAINING:

A similar type of self-evaluation is used in teacher-training courses. McQualter (1985) argues in favour of the use of self-assessment in collaboration with tutors to explore and understand the personal view each student teach-er has of teaching. The discussion sessions that ought to follow a self-assessment question-naire might reveal important information for the tutor and also for the student-teacher. Doff (1988) has included a self-evaluation questionnaire after each unit in his training course for future foreign language teachers. The purpose of the questionnaire is to encourage the teachers to-be to reflect on their own teaching-practice after each training session. A similar questionnaire has also been used by the writer of this article in her own training courses of teachers. The future teachers are, at the end of each session, encouraged to discuss the session, their own input and the outcome of it. Towards the end of the year, before their final grade in the course is given, they are asked to fill out a detailed self-evaluation questionnaire which forces them to reflect on their own work throughout the year (see appendix 1.) This questionnaire is then used as the basis for tutorials with the teach-er-trainer, who has, in the meantime, filled out a similar questionnaire about the trainee. The trainee's course-grade is then decided on during the tutorial. The correlation between the trainee's and the trainer's assessment is usually surprisingly high. This might be explained by the fact that the future teachers have become familiar with self-evaluation throughout the course.

In-service training of teachers is an area whose importance is unquestionable, and self-evaluation is of greatest value for self-understanding and instructional improvement (Carroll, 1981). The people who are always in the classroom to assess the teaching are the teachers themselves (and the pupils of course). Most teachers assess the lesson and their own teaching informally when they leave the class-room. In a more formal evaluation-situation with an inspector or supervisor present in the classroom, a guided self-report instrument will help to focus the evaluation of teaching, and it has a higher level of agreement with the supervisor's evaluation than global self-evalua-tion has. The accuracy of the teachers' self-evaluation increases when the process is repeated (Koziol and Burns, 1986), and this speaks for a formative use of self-evaluation and the importance of teaching the learners how to evaluate themselves. Williams (1989) describes a questionnaire developed for this purpose (see appendix 2), and which has success-fully been used by the writer as an external reference point for pre and post observation tutorials.

PRACTICAL USES OF SELF-EVALUATION IN TEACHER-TRAINING:

A book I have found very useful while training my students to evaluate their own teaching is Janine Pak's book: Find Out How You Teach. As is said in the foreword:

> "This handbook is designed to assist classroom teachers increase their awareness of what is happening in their class-rooms. The advantage of the techniques is that they allow teachers to carry out their own analysis without having outside observers in the classroom." (p.ix)

This is in fact one of our ultimate aims as teacher-trainers; to enable our trainees to evaluate themselves when they leave the safe framework of a training-course with a tutor at hand to observe their lessons and to provide constructive feedback. When working independently the trainee-teachers are asked to record their lessons on audio cassette or on video cassettes, and then to analyse their own lesson with the help of whichever questionnaire in the Pak book is relevant to that lesson.

Whichever self-evaluation questionnaire is to be used, whether my own, Williams' or Pak's, my usual procedure is to have a short tutorial with the trainee before I come to observe her/his lesson. In this tutorial the trainees are asked to think of what they feel needs to be improved in their teaching; lesson-planning, the content of the lesson such as vocabulary, reading etc., techniques such as giving instructions or organizing classroom

tasks, class organization such as pair/group work, use of resources such as the board, or classroom interaction such as student-student interaction. The trainees are then asked to write a detailed lesson-plan having this in mind, and a copy of the plan is given to me before I observe the lesson. The trainees are told that they are free to change the plan on the spot if the need is felt while teaching. They must, however, be ready to reason why they did so.

In the tutorial that follows the lesson that I observe, the trainees are presented with the self-evaluation questionnaire relevant to the specific lesson, and they fill it out by themselves while I am doing the same. Afterwards we discuss the answers, finding out where and why we differ in our responses.

The next stage is to ask the trainees to work with the self-evaluation questionnaire without me observing the lessons, but they should record their lessons and hand the record-ing and the filled in questionnaire to me before the tutorial.

The last stage is to ask the trainees to work with the lesson plans, the recording and the self-evaluation questionnaire independently of me. By this I hope to make the trainees aware of the importance of evaluating their own teaching, hoping they will do so when they are out in the "jungle" all by themselves.

The aim is to make the trainees realize that a good teacher is constantly striving to improve her/his teaching, and that objective self-assessment is the best tool they have for doing that. Therefore they must become familiar with the technique during their training so they will use it with confidence while work-ing independently in the future.

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APPENDIX 1

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE ORANIM

Kari Smith

NAME:

1.

I have been present in all the lessons. Yes/No

I have been absent from ..... lessons.

2.

I have contributed a lot during the sessions.

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2

I have contributed little during the sessions. 1

3.

I have handed in all the assignments. 10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2

I have handed in no assignments. 1

4.

I have handed in all the assignments on time. 10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2

I have handed in all the assignments late. 1

THE USE OF SELF-EVALUATION IN TEACHER TRAINING cont'd

5.

The level of my assignments is very high (papers). 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

The level of my assignments is low (papers). 1

6.

I have read at least 5 books from the reading list. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

I have read nothing from the reading list. 1

7.

I have been of great help to my peers. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

I have been of no help to my peers. 1

8.

I have done very well in teaching at school and during practice teaching at Oranim. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

I have done poorly in my teaching practice. 1

9.

All the lessons I taught were well prepared. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

My lessons were poorly prepared. 1

10.

I have progressed a lot during the year. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

I have not progressed during the year. 1

11.

I think I am going to be an excellent teacher. 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

I think I should not become a teacher. 1

12.

Based on this my grade in practice teaching should be:

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

13.

Based on this my grade in methodology should be:

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Suggestions for improving the course for future students.

Signature:

APPENDIX 2

From: Williams, M. "A Developmental View of Classroom Observations", ELT, Vol. 43/2, April 1989 (Reprinted with permission)

Figure 2: Second classroom visit: self-evaluation form

==========

Before the lesson ask yourself:

1. Is your activity at an appropriate intellectual level to stretch and challenge children of this age? Is it too easy/difficult)? Is it interesting, motivating? Is there enough opportunity for the pupils to talk?
2. What meaningful language will it promote?
3. Where will there be opportunities for pupils to give their own ideas?
4. What is the place of the activity in your scheme of work? What preceded it? What will follow it? Show this on your lesson plan.
5. Show how it might involve/lead into read-ing, writing, grammar, etc.
6. What might the pupils learn? Write the aim of the activity and the language aims on your lesson plan.
7. What provision have you made for pupils who finish quickly/slowly?

During and after the lesson, ask yourself:

8. What evidence was there that the pupils were interested/not interested?
9. Who was not involved? Why?
10. Write down on paper some language that pupils used. Was it meaningful or meaningless?
11. What will you do next to follow up this lesson?
12. Which of your aims were achieved? Were other things achieved instead?
13. When did pupils give their own ideas? Did you accept their ideas? Did they have a fair share of time to talk or did you dominate the discussion?

What have you learnt? Write down how you would like to develop your teaching in the future.

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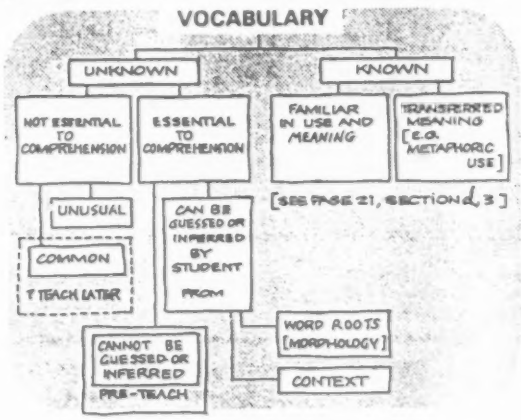
WHEN SHOULD I CORRECT?
The use of Algorithms in Teacher Training by Mick Randall

Algorithms, 'networks' or 'decision trees', are ways of laying out a series of logi -cal decisions in a diagrammatic form to help either explain or investigate the steps taken in order to carry out a particular task. They attempt to show how a series of decisions interrelate and interact in a task. Such diagrams, much used in computer programming, are being increasingly used in many other fields such as management. A good example of their use in teacher training can be seen in the following diagram taken from Willis (1981, p.114) and reprinted by kind permission of Longman Publishers. The diagram lays out the considerations involved in deciding which voca -bulary items to pre-teach in a language lesson.



I find such algorithms useful ways of laying out decisions, but there are two problems with using such tools in teacher training.

The first concerns the suitability of such diagrammatic representations for the trainees. I happen to like and respond to such representations because of my particular educational and cultural background, but many people do not find the concept of an algorithm at all transparent.

The second problem lies with the use of an algorithm as a learning aid. A completed algorithm is essentially an explanatory tool. It gives a solution which looks very neat and tidy, but it does not lead to the active involvement of the learners and thus any personal exploration or ownership of the concepts being portrayed. The observer tends to say "Yes, that's good" and passes on to the next task. Thus, the completed algorithm is essentially a passive tool.

Given such a reaction from the learner, it is also difficult for the trainer (or the trainee, for that matter) to know if the ideas have been fully understood and explored, or if the general principles of algorithms are understood.

One technique I've used to tackle the two problems mentioned above is to allow the trainees to build their own algorithm around a particular area. The example shown below is used to start a discussion on the considerations involved in making a correction. I provide a blank algorithm along with the information necessary to fill in the decision boxes. I then put the trainees in pairs or groups to find a pedagogically sound way of putting the information on to the algorithm. The ensuing discussion forces the trainees to consider several important issues such as the importance of learner reactions to errors (Will the student be upset?) as against classroom/teacher issues (Is it a part of the lesson in which I want them to be correct?), or issues of communication (Is it an error which leads to a breakdown in communication?). The resulting 'solution(s)' produced by the pairs/groups can then be presented and the issues involved discussed by the full group. Such an exercise produces an algorithm which the trainees have participated in constructing and one in which they have a degree of ownership of the ideas expressed. It also indicates any problems that trainees have with understanding the function of an algorithm, and will help them when they next encounter one.

Empty algorithms can also be used to provoke discussion of the types of error correction possible (e.g. self-correction, peer correction or teacher correction, and their logical ordering). Once understood, algorithms or algorithmic approaches are a useful method for exploring many classroom techniques and lesson management decisions. For example, the process of deciding, (after checking student understanding of a concept) whether or not to re-present a particular item of language can easily be represented by an algorithm. The value of the algorithm is that it allows the trainer and the trainee bridge the gap between theory and practice; to transfer general 'theoretical' issues into actual classroom behaviour. Willis, J. (1981). Teaching English Through English. Longman.

Task

The following are questions which you need to ask yourself when you encounter a mistake made by a student. If the answer to some questions is 'No', then you might want to ignore the error. If the answer to questions is 'Yes' you might want to correct. Discuss the questions in groups and place them on the algorithm in the decision boxes so that you correct errors when they need to be corrected and ignore them when you want to ignore them. The first question has already been placed on the algorithm for you.

A. Is it a pattern the student should know?

Now place the other questions onto the algorithm:

B. Is it a part of the lesson when I want the students to be accurate?

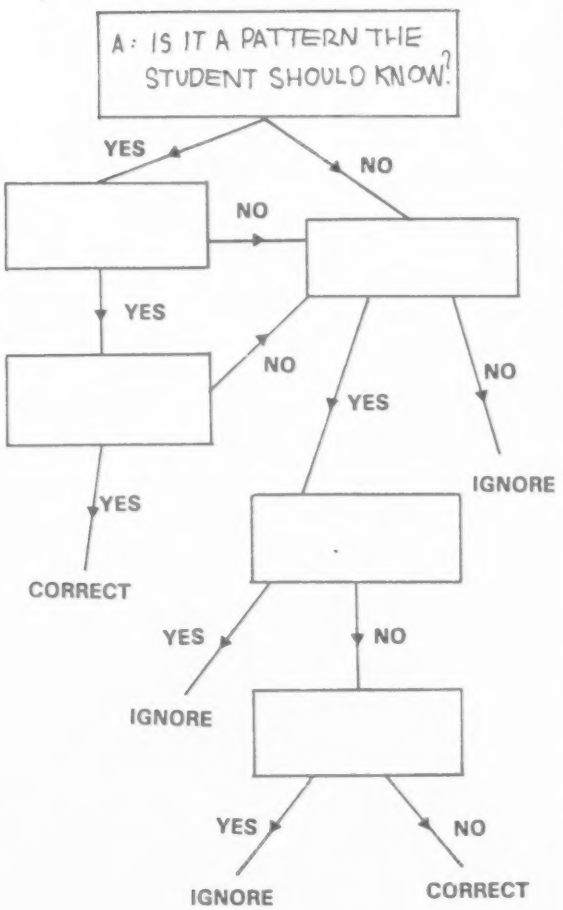
C. Will the student be upset if I correct the error?

D. Will the lesson flow less smoothly if I correct the error?

E. Is it an error which leads to a breakdown in communication?

F. Is it an error I want to concentrate on?

When to correct and when to ignore errors.



THE COST OF FAILURE
by Kate Pearce

A few months ago I was pleased to receive a 'phone call from someone I shall call John who had just completed an RSA/Cambridge Cert. TEFLA course. He wanted to return some books he had borrowed from me.

"So how did it go?" I asked.

"Well ..." There was a pause, "I'm afraid it ended in failure. It seems I'm not cut out for a career in TEFL after all."

When he came round with the books, the story he told set me thinking about the validity of our short, initial Teacher Training courses.

The first week, it seemed, had been great. John had been prepared to put everything into the course and give up his social life for the month, as everyone says you have to, so the intensity of the course came as no surprise. In the second week, he and the other course members were getting a little tired but after a chat with his tutor, John felt reassured that everything was going fine. The third week meant a change of T.P. tutor and John sensed that there could be a personality clash, but he didn't want to make a fuss and anyway, they were more than halfway through the course. At the beginning of the fourth week, the new tutor told John, after a T.P. session, that he was quite likely to fail the course. John was shocked and upset but asked the tutor to explain which aspects of his teaching he should concentrate on. The tutor told him she wouldn't know where to start.

The rest of the week passed with John worrying about his T.P. sessions, trying to finish his written assignments and, not surprisingly, losing confidence in his abilities. A few days after the course he heard that he had, indeed, failed. Four weeks' hard work, four weeks' loss of income, £650 in course fees, hopes and dreams of a new career direction and, I am sure, a good deal of self esteem - all down the drain.

Now wait a minute, I hear you say. Yes, poor John. Yes, the second tutor needs to be sacked or at least given a sabbatical to go and 're-fresh' herself as a trainer. Yes, it's a lot of money. Yes, he should have been told sooner if he really wasn't up to scratch - BUT - we do have to fail people on these courses. We can't pass every Tom, Dick and Harry. It's bad enough that we let people loose on EFL classes after only a four week course.

THE COST OF FAILURE cont'd

Exactly. I think it's the four weeks that worries me most. Pay £650 and give up any other life you might have for four weeks to make or break as an E.F.L. teacher. Does any other profession have anything quite like it?

I started thinking about it because I feel quite strongly that John would have made a very good E.F.L. teacher. It could be that during the four week course he did not shine at Language Analysis or manage to master brilliant drilling techniques. Maybe the tutor really didn't know where to start when it came to analysing that particular T.P. session. But if it had been a twelve week, or even thirty week course with days or weeks of teaching practice rather than just a few hours, maybe then John would have passed and the profession could have gained a sound, committed E.F.L. teacher.

I met John when he was a participant on a one week 'taster' course which I was coordinating for prospective E.F.L. teachers. He thought he would like to teach E.F.L. but wasn't sure exactly what it entailed so he took a week off work and paid £120 to find out more. Of the twenty course members, he was the only one who had done all the background reading and his participation in the course was both informed and keen. At the end of the week he applied to do the Cambridge/RSA Certificate TEFLA at several institutions and accepted the place which was offered to him first. He might have considered doing a PGCE in TESOL but he already had a PGCE and had been a Science teacher for eleven years.

When he brought my books back, he was about to go off on holiday "to try and decide what next." I suggested the possibility of contacting his course tutors and finding out more about what had gone wrong - but he was adamant that he had been put off TEFL for good.

John's experience and its implications were simmering in my mind as I went along to the 'Trainee Voices Day', a meeting of the IATEFL Special Interest Group for Teacher Trainers held on 24th November 1990. During the day we looked at feedback from several trainees on various TEFL courses throughout the country. One issue which came across loud and clear to all of us was the trainees' concern with the cost of their course and the possibility that they might fail, thus 'wasting' the money and time invested. This, combined with the intensity of the courses, produces a fair amount of stress and anxiety.

Below are some extracts from the trainees' feedback which will, I hope, inspire fellow Course Planners and Teacher Trainers to take a fresh look at the circumstances in which we train our future colleagues and, at the very least, serve to remind us of what our trainees may have invested in our courses, of the potential stress and anxiety involved, of the cost of failure - in short of our responsibility.

"About the cost - £600+: it was the main problem in coming here. I wanted to 'do it' before but had to work 6 months as a waitress to save up! Why is it spiralling so fast? If I had done it 2 years ago I could have saved a couple of hundred pounds. I don't understand this TEFL specific inflation. I also keep thinking that if I fail, I will have wasted not only £600 but 6 months of my life working only to earn it."

" ... Talking about these lows, yes, I've gone thru them too! Why? Well, we came to the conclusion yesterday that it was something to do with STRESS - no, not word stress, but the stress of this whole situation. Time, or lack thereof; fatigue; and pressure placed upon us by teaching every day from day 1. I can't pinpoint it but all the textbooks go on about this stress-free environment for learning - and us???"

"Finally, the pass/fail element, although it is no strange thing in courses, it does somehow make one experience different degrees of stress compounded with the knowledge that you could be doing badly and not know about it."

"I would feel more comfortable if I had been treated as an adult with other needs, that is other than a month long course. If the intensity is necessary for this short period of time, I'd suggest adding another week to the course and putting a few blocks of free time in there for ME - the human being. I need time to walk and think. That's beneficial too."

"Teachers have been kind and generally supportive. But while they tell us that students learn best in a stress-free atmosphere, they do not apply that philosophy to us. There is more than necessary stress in this course and it gets to the point that it is non-motivating. Frankly I don't care what they say about my T.P. because I'm too tired to care. By week three I'm simply going through the motions."

"Main worry is failing it and wasting £650. A lot of the problems come from the artificial aspects of it. Four weeks to become an EFL teacher. Fifteen minute performances etc. Maybe if more was made of an attendance certificate: not the pass/fail aspect of it which is the main cause of stress I think."

It seems that there are no easy answers to the problems outlined above, but perhaps we have reached a stage, as a profession, where we need to assess the present situation as regards initial Teacher Training and rethink our response to the massive growth in the TEFL industry.

Conference Reports

THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE
by Tom Hutchinson

Synopsis of paper presented at IATEFL SIG Symposium January 1991

Introduction

We can look at change in two ways. We can consider it, first of all, in terms of the change itself - the new syllabus, the new technique, the new textbook etc. However, this kind of view will not explain many of the difficulties and apparent irrationalities that are experienced in the change process. An alternative is to view change in terms of the change in behaviour (and the attitudes and values that underlie that behaviour) required of the people involved in order to accommodate themselves to the actual innovation.

Change as a human problem

When we view change as a human problem in this way, a number of fundamental features emerge:

1. Change is not just a professional concept. Change is a natural part of the human condition. It is likely that people react to professional change in the same way as they react to change in other aspects of their lives, such as marriage, accidents, growing up etc.

2. Change in one aspect of a person's life will have an effect on, and be affected by, other aspects. Reactions to professional change, therefore, can often have little or nothing to do with the actual change itself, but may be conditioned by apparently unrelated factors.

3. Change poses a potential threat to what psychologists call the 'key meanings' of our lives (Blacker and Shimmin, 1984). Key meanings provide stability and security, and make our behaviour meaningful. Examples of key mean-ings are our relationships with other people, our perception of our status, our moral or religious values, our group allegiances, our habits and routines. Any change poses a threat to one or more of these key meanings.

We aim to maintain a balance in the complex ecology of our key meanings. Change threatens this balance. As a result, the commonest reaction to change is resistance.

Individual reactions to change

Marris (1974) approached the question of individual reactions to change by studying reactions to bereavement. He argued that if we study how people react to what must be the most disruptive of all changes - the death of a loved one -, this can give us an indication of how people react to change in general.

The behaviour of the bereaved follows predictable patterns and is characterised by apparent contradictions. For example, they say that they have nothing to live for and yet rush back to work; they say that they want to forget, but obsessively cultivate reminders of the dead loved one.

The shock of bereavement, Marris argues, throws the key meanings of a person's life out of balance. In the process of grieving the bereaved person tries to restore the balance by resolving the contradictions and conflicts that the disturbance has created. Methodological change, of course, cannot compare in severity to the shock of bereavement. But any significant change will disturb the key meanings of an individual's life and create a need to restore the balance. The important feature of this process, however, is its highly personal nature.

'To protect key meanings we will defend the contexts within which they developed. Reason, persuasion and argument by others are not enough to help people adjust to significant losses, for no-one can solve for someone else the crisis of re-integration that disruptive changes impose.' (Blackler and Shimmin, 1984).

The individual reaction to change, therefore, is slow, fraught with contradictions and highly personal.

Group reactions to change

Each individual is a member of a network of different groups - national, regional, ethnic, gender, family, language and age groups, as well as work groups, political and leisure groups, etc.

Groups provide a number of benefits. Blackler and Shimmin (1984) list the following 'psychological rewards' of group membership:

1. Groups provide identity and esteem.
2. Groups enable us to test reality.
3. Groups satisfy our need to belong and to be wanted.
4. Groups make individuals more powerful and thus better able to achieve their aims.

Groups develop norms of behaviour which provide an identity for the group and which mark it off from other groups. The price we pay for the benefits of group support is loyalty to these group norms. Group norms

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THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE cont'd

change very slowly and any threat to them will provoke defensive action.

Individuals act both as themselves and as representatives of their groups. Since individuals greatly fear isolation from their groups, when in doubt it is best to trust the group loyalty to dominate.

The power of groups to affect individual behaviour is generally ignored in ELT teacher training, where teachers are by and large trained or retrained as individuals. The logic of the ideas on group norms argues in favour of educating teachers in their normal work groups i.e. their school, faculty or department.

Varying perceptions of a change

When considering human behaviour, there is no objective reality. People behave in accordance with how they perceive the situation to be. And perceptions vary, because individuals approach the same situation with different key meanings. 'Changes which appear reasonable and straightforward to some may, in altogether unforeseen ways, undermine certain key attachments that are felt by others.' (Blackler and Shimmin, 1984).

If changes are to be effective, the differing perceptions of all concerned parties must be taken into account. If they are not, there is a risk that reaction to the change will be non-committal or downright obstructive. (For a good illustration of this, see Tomlinson, 1990. In Tomlinson's example the perceptions of certain key players were not taken into account with the result that many of the aims of the project were not fulfilled.) (See also Tomlinson, 1988).

Educational innovation is particularly prone to this kind of problem, as educational systems comprise a large number of groups with differing needs and interests - as well as teachers and students, there are headteachers, ministry officials, inspectors and advisers, examination bodies, textbook writers, academics and publishers.

As far as teacher development is concerned, the concept of differing perceptions throws up the question of who should decide the content and nature of INSET courses. What may be perceived as a problem by the trainers may not be seen as problematic by the teachers themselves and vice versa.

How do people resist change?

Resistance to change follows general patterns (Blackler and Shimmin, 1984):

1. The simplest strategy is inertia.

2. If personal inertia does not work, the next stage is to exploit the inertia of other interested parties such as the ministry, the inspectorate, the trades unions, the parents, etc.

3. A more active form of resistance is to accentuate all the negative aspects of the change. "It's too time-consuming. It's too noisy, etc."

4. If this fails, resistance has to take the more personal form of questioning the abilities of the change agents or their right to introduce the change.

5. Finally resisters can exploit the lack of insider knowledge of the change agents. The expatriate ELT 'expert' is particularly vulnerable to this strategy.

These general strategies have one underlying characteristic - they all put the responsibility elsewhere. The motivation for resistance is basically fear of the disturbance of key meanings or fear of isolation from a group. People, however, are reluctant to admit to fears and inadequacies. They, thus, look for a socially acceptable mask (Berne 1967). When people say "That won't work in my classroom", they are really saying: "I'm scared of trying that in my classroom."

Dealing with resistance

How can we make use of these ideas in the management of change? Fundamentally we need to be more concerned with getting the process of change right and worrying less about the product. In this approach we can identify a number of important guidelines:

1. All concerned parties must be involved in order to gain the commitment of everyone to the change. This is generally known as 'getting a contract for change.'

2. People should be encouraged to express their resistance. So long as resistance remains hidden, it remains a problem and a poten-tial threat to the success of the change.

3. The commitment of all parties to a change is vital, if the necessary time and effort are to be invested. This commitment will be most readily given, if the people involved feel that it is their own change. This is known as sharing the ownership of change.

None of the above strategies will guarantee the effectiveness of any change, but as a gene-ral approach they are at least consistent with the studies of how people react to change, described above.
Furthermore, there is empirical evidence from the world of industry for the validity of this kind of approach. The most coherent model is the Total Quality Approach, variations of which are used by the world's most successful companies. A key feature of the Total Quality Approach is the high level of worker involvement in quality control and improvement through such mechanisms as Quality Circles. While such

a model cannot be taken over wholesale into ELT, we can learn a lot from the approach in general and exploit a number of the techniques. (For more information on this approach see Robson 1988).

Conclusion

Change is an important feature in ELT, particularly in the area of teacher development. We need to see change as a human problem and concentrate on the impact that any change will have on the individuals and groups involved. This involves recognising some important aspects of how people react to change.

Change disturbs the framework by which we make sense of our lives and our natural reaction is to resist. On an individual level change gene-rates the problem of integrating new ideas or actions into our existing network of key meanings. The process of accommodation is slow, often contradictory and can only be achieved by the individual concerned. Change also threatens group norms. People fear isolation from their groups and so will resist straying too far from the group norm, even at the cost of their own individual feelings. Lastly, in any social activity, such as education, there will be differing perceptions of the need for and the nature of any change.

These views of the impact of change have important implications for any profession, like ELT, that is seriously concerned with innovation. Most importantly, they indicate a need to develop sensitive and supportive environments in which people can adjust to changes that affect their working lives.

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TRAINER BACKGROUND

THE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING OF VOCABULARY - PRESENTING NEW ITEMS

by Linda Taylor

I read with interest the article by Dr. Francisco Gomes de Matos on "Training Teachers as Explainers" in the Teacher Trainer Vol. 4/1 Spring 1990, and I'd like to share with other readers some ideas for helping trainees to explain vocabulary, which I have been working on recently.*

One way of helping teachers to attain clarity in explanations is for them, first of all, to decide whether to pre-familiarise or post-familiarise:-

Prefamiliarisation is a technique for establish-ing 'sense' first by encouraging students to attend to the topic, then moving on to 'item' (Example 1):

EXAMPLE 1

Teacher: What do you call the special big shoes that come up to here for ... em ... when it's snowing?

Student: Er ...

Teacher: Not shoes, but ...

Student: Boots.

Postfamiliarisation is the opposite process, where 'item' is given before 'sense' (Example 2):

EXAMPLE 2

Teacher: "In fact". Do you know what that means?

Student: "In fact".

Teacher: "In fact". Really.

A non-verbal stimulus, such as a picture prompt, is well suited to prefamiliarisation, whereas a written stimulus, such as a word on the board or in a text, lends itself to post-familiarisation.

An oral/aural stimulus, as in both Examples 1 and 2, is equally applicable to post and pre-familiarisation. In order to give learners as wide a knowledge as possible of an item, a com-

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* These (and other) ideas appear in Teaching and Learning Vocabulary (Prentice Hall 1990)

THE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING OF VOCABULARY cont'd

bination of stimuli, with both pre- and post-familiarisation, is desirable, in order to facilitate transfer from short to long-term memory (Example 3):

EXAMPLE 3

T:	(Holding up picture) What shall we give her?	Pre-familiar-isation: non-verbal stimulus
S_1	Oh (L1)	
T:	Mmm ... Let's give her some ...	
S_2	Pen. pen	
T:	Lipstick.	Post-familiarisation: oral stimulus
S	Lipstick.	
T:	Pen for the lips. Lipstick.	
S	Lipstick.	
T:	Let's give her some lipstick. (Writes on board).	
	..... 10 minutes later	
S:	Li ... li ... lipstick?	Post-familiarisation: written stimulus
T:	Lipstick yes, let's give her a dishwasher. Now then..	
S:	Libbesstick? Er .. c k?	
T:	Lipstick c k. yes right.	

Teaching Word Meanings

Trainees can be shown the usefulness of synonyms, paraphrase and definition (Example 4):

EXAMPLE 4

(a) **Definition:**

(i) Bungalow. T: And it means a home with only one floor.

(ii) Poster. T: A big, something colourful to put on the wall ...

(iii) Partner. T: Your partner means the person that you are next to ...

(b) **Synonymy:**

(i) Detached. T: It means alone.

(ii) Main. T: The main food, the usual food, is antelope.

(d) **Paraphrase:**

(i) Interesting. T: Do you think Retford is interesting? Is it interesting? Is it em ... can you find things to do there?

(ii) Move. T: Why did she move, why did she go away from Bolton?

An important point to keep in mind when providing definitions is that learners appear to require explanation of both description and function (Example 5):

EXAMPLE 5

Teacher: Keep her nice and warm ... FUR coat yes ... this is a FUR coat: for the winter ... made from er ... sometimes real animal skins but usually made by man.

(Description: made from skins/by man

Function: for the winter/keep warm)

Problems of comprehension seem to arise if only description or only function is given (Example 6):

EXAMPLE 6

Teacher: Let's go (shows picture) ... skating, shall we?

Student: Skating, for dance?

(Description: picture prompt

Function: missing, requested by student)

Using an antonym, or contrast, may make meaning clearer. Words are only signs after all,

and it is the difference between signs that defines them. If, for example, we have to teach the item "ground floor", we can predict at least two problems: the confusion of "ground" with "earth" and perhaps with "underground" and the polysemy of "floor", which means both "ground" and "storey". It is therefore sensible to teach by contrast with "first floor", "basement", "second floor".

Repetition

Learners usually seem to remember best those items which have recurred many times, and especially those which they have uttered themselves. The role of repetition cannot be under-estimated. Choral or at least teacher-directed repetition does aid recall, and individual student repetition of an item, especially if it can be done with humour, is most effective. Some teachers may not feel confident directing choral repetition, since it does demand something of the skill of a bandleader! A less overt way of effecting repetition is to use a questioning technique rather than simply to model the item (Example 7):

EXAMPLE 7

(Teacher uses series of pictures)

T: Is he excited, or bored?

S: Bored

T: And this woman here?

S: Bored.

T: What about the other man, what do you think about him?

S: Very bored.

A further way of achieving a number of repetitions is for the teacher to repeat the item, but to require the learners to respond appropriately (Example 8):

EXAMPLE 8

T: What date is it today? It's the 13th, yes.

S: But day?

T: Day. Monday. Tuesday. Wednesday...

S: Ah.

T: What date is it tomorrow?

S: It's 14th November.

T: 14th November tomorrow, isn't it? What day is it today?

S: It's Tuesday.

T: Aha.

Giving Clear Explanations

In naturally occurring conversation, familiarisations tend to be glossed over, so that they are not really perceived as such at all. In the formal teaching of vocabulary, we need to make sure that our familiarisations are clearly seen as explanations, not asides. In Example 9, it is not clear that "he doesn't look nice" is meant as a paraphrase of "ugly", nor that "he's looking at it very carefully" and "he doesn't notice anyone" are meant as paraphrases of "he is interested". The paraphrases themselves are most misleading, since one may "look nice" whilst still being "ugly", and "look carefully" whilst not being "interested".

EXAMPLE 9

(a) Interested:

T: He is interested, he's looking at it very carefully. He doesn't notice anybody else.

(b) Ugly:

T: Why he's ugly, he doesn't look nice uh? No.

S: Sad.

T: Now the thing is ...

In order to avoid such ambiguity we need to make our explanations clear, for example in one of the following ways:

1. Using a phrase such as "that means ..."
2. Using clearly enunciated delivery for the item being taught.
3. Making the item salient by saying it more slowly, loudly, or at higher pitch.
4. Eliciting a number of repetitions of the item.
5. Using more than one synonym, paraphrase, or example in context.
6. Attending to both semantic and acoustic parameters, i.e. both meaning and sound.

Knowledge of a Word

I feel it is better to teach the meaning of an item first, i.e. its semantic aspect, and then its form, i.e. aspects of pronunciation spelling,morphology, syntax. In this way we can avoid over-loading our learners' capacities. For example, in spoken interaction involving vocabulary teaching, we might have on the one hand negotiation for meaning, which focuses on content, and on the other hand choral repetition, which emphasises form.

There is much more to vocabulary than denotation…frequency, register, connotation, collocation, for example, have not been touched on here. However, the more ways we can use to familiarise vocabulary, the better chance we have of making it understood, so it is a good idea to teach several aspects of 'knowledge of a word' together. It is also beneficial for learners, adults especially, to write down items needed for active use.

Observation and Feedback

EXORCISM AS A TOOL IN TEACHER TRAINING: THE "OBSERVED LESSON" by Martin Parrott

Is there anybody there?

Observation of lessons given by teachers is a fundamental part of many teacher training programmes. The role of the observer varies, but can broadly be classified in terms of the following:

> The observer may describe his or her perception of what happens in the lesson.
>
> The observer may give advice to the teacher.
>
> The observer may describe alternatives to the procedures adopted by the teacher in the lesson.
>
> The observer may encourage the teacher to reflect on, analyse and evaluate the content of the lesson.
>
> The observer may pay particular attention to something the teacher has chosen to work on.
>
> The observer may record the involvement and responses of the students so that more classroom data becomes available to the teacher.

In practice, the observer often adopts all these roles in different combinations depending on the personality and experience of the teacher, the nature of the lesson and his or her personal preferences. Some observers may also praise the teacher for what they like in the lesson.

The common factor in each of these approaches is a concern with what happens in the lesson - the focus of discussion is often the reactions and involvement of the learners, the materials, techniques and management skills of the teacher, or the choices the teacher has made with regard to the content of the lesson. Whether the observer has made concrete suggestions or has acted merely as a facilitator for reflection on the part of the teacher, the product of the observation and the ensuing discussion is often the realisation by the teacher that she needs to do certain things, or the realisation of measures she can adopt in order to do things better.

The kinds of resolutions the teacher takes away from the experience are often something like the following:

> I need to pay more attention to mistakes made by my students.
>
> I need to create more opportunity for students to practise and use new language.
>
> I need to allow sufficient time for activities.
>
> I need to allow the learners to work on their own without intervening and 'hi-jacking' activities.

This kind of resolution and awareness is, of course, valuable. Yet, in my experience, like all resolutions, there is often an apparently unbridgeable gap between the awareness of what should be done and what the teacher finds herself doing. An example from my own experience as a teacher (and as a teacher trainer): I know (and have known for many years) that if I hurry an activity at the end of a lesson in order to get through what I have planned to do, both the students and I wil leave the lesson feeling dissatisfied. I know that it is better to cut an activity short without rushing it or, better still, simply to axe the intended final activity and possibly finish the activity early. And yet I still find myself rushing at the end of so many lessons.

From my experience as an observer of other teachers' lessons I can supply additional examples. Two familiar ones will suffice to illustrate the point, however:

> Teacher A believes in student-centred learning, can describe exactly what she needs to do in order to create the optimum conditions for this, and yet always finds herself the centre of attention.
>
> Teacher B recognises the need to assert herself at points in the lesson to gain the attention of the whole class, can describe what she needs in order to do this, and yet consistently fails to do so.

It seems to me that there are limitations to a concern with what a teacher does, can do or should do. Beyond this point we need also to explore why so many of us have these 'blocks' which prevent us from actually applying the knowledge and awareness we have.

Recognising 'ghosts'

Underlying these 'blocks' I believe there are often deep-rooted general fears. One of the functions an observer can perform is to help the teacher to identify these with a view to further helping her to exorcise them.

If we take the example of the teacher who seems incapable of relinquishing control and ask her, "What is the worst thing that could happen if you did relinquish control in the classroom?", with a degree of encouragement and gentle questioning, she is likely to start recognising in herself a fear of chaos. The chances are that it is not only in the classroom that this teacher finds herself compulsively exercising control - on some more general level she is

threatened by the idea of being out of control, and it may well not only be in the classroom that she feels she constantly has to work to avoid things falling to pieces. Similarly, the teacher who constantly rushes through activities may have a fundamental fear of boring her students, or of the students complaining that they are not getting their money's worth. And the teacher who talks all the way through her lessons, filling every space with a barrage of words and finding that her students are becoming more and more passive as a result, may well have fear of silence, a fear that the students themselves will not intitiate communication. The irony of this latter example is that students who are talked at do lose their willingness to initiate, and it is easy for the teacher to be convinced that her fear is justified.

In these cases, the observer, the tutor or the director of studies can work in the first place to encourage the teacher to recognise the fear. This recognition is frequently accompanied by a sense of revelation. The answer to the question, "What is the worst thing which could happen if you did .....?", however, often elicits only a very general expression of the fear to accompany the sense of revelation - "Chaos; they wouldn't do anything - they would be bored". In these cases the teacher often finds it difficult to be specific about what would happen and why it would be so difficult to deal with. At this stage, the teacher will often recognise that the feeling of dread is disproportionate and inappropriate to the imagined eventuality itself.

Bringing in the holy water

To continue the metaphor of exorcism, the ghost has been identified and recognised for what it is. However, the exorcism is as yet far from complete. Nor does the next and final stage complete the process - but it initiates the final stage of the process and may enable the teacher to begin to overcome the fear and its associated 'block'. This final stage involves the teacher in deliberately provoking what she is most afraid of - the teacher who is frightened of running out of material allows herself to stop in the middle of the lesson in order to experience how she feels when the students have been given no direction, and in order to learn what, in fact, may happen in these circumstances; the teacher who is afraid of silence walks into the classroom and says nothing for ten minutes in order to learn what happens, to experience her own feelings in this situation; the teacher who is afraid of chaos designs and uses an activity in which the students are responsible for organising and conducting the lesson themselves; the teacher who is afraid that the students will be offended if she is directive in the class deliberately issues orders to the group and to individuals within the group.

From one perspective it might be argued that this is little different from telling the teacher to 'talk less', 'teach less', 'be less directive' or 'be more directive'. However, it is different. The focus is on how the teacher feels in these circumstances, and the creation of these circumstances is an experiment to allow the teacher to experience these feelings. There is no question of 'doing well' or 'doing badly', no question of success or failure. And, whether the observer is present during the lesson or not, her role is to give the teacher unconditional support and reassurance before, during and after the experiment. Unless the teacher trusts the observer to give this support, it may be better not to carry out the experiment.

In my experience the first tangible consequence of this approach is often that the teachers acquire the conviction that change is possible. This contrasts with their previous sense of frustration at the seeming insurmountability of the 'block'. Over a period of time their fear diminishes. And the diminishing of their fear allows them to begin to make the kinds of changes that previously eluded them.

They have begun the process of exorcising their personal 'ghosts'.

Footnote

When I first submitted this article to 'The Teacher Trainer', the Editor quite rightly questioned whether I had, in fact, tried the holy water myself. She also asked me if I felt the observer should discuss behavioural options with the teachers prior to the experiment, for example what a teacher with a tendency to dominate might do when she stops "teaching" in the middle of a lesson.

With the years I think I have overcome my fear of being boring to students, but the editor's first question led me to reflect that this par-ticular fear still persists with regard to audiences. Whenever I am asked to give a lecture, I tend to turn it into a seminar and integrate group work, the fear being that forty five minutes of my voice will send everyone to sleep. So four days ago I did it.

I had been asked to lecture to a large group of teachers of English from Soviet Georgia, and the topic was classroom-based research. I made ▸▸

EXORCISM AS A TOOL IN TEACHER TRAINING: cont'd

myself talk for three quarters of an hour and allowed for no organised interaction between the participants. I hated the experience, particularly as I noticed somebody nodding off at one point. But on the other hand, the general feedback was positive and I now feel just a little more confident about lecturing for this length of time. I am glad I tried it, although I also wish that I had primed a sympathetic observer to support me through it.

With regard to the second question, whether observers should discuss behavioural options with the teachers prior to their experiment, I think my answer is 'no'. I think that 'fear-bound' teachers usually know the behavioural options, but feel unable to apply them. To take the case of stopping or saying nothing in the middle of a lesson for ten minutes in order to see what happens, in my experience of witnessing this on a number of occasions, part of the lesson the teacher often takes away is one about the nature of groups. Certainly in the case of groups of adult learners, the members of the group usually create their own sense of order and take advantage of space created by the teacher to initiate discussion and to bring their own needs to the fore. In cases such as this though, it is perhaps useful for the observer to discuss with the teacher in advance the mechanics of 'freezing' - what the teacher will actually say to the students immediately prior to this (for example, "Now I am going to do nothing for ten minutes, so this part of the lesson is yours.").

Martin Parrott
International House, London.

Dear Editor

Dear Editor

Do we detect a case of double standards?

It seems remarkable that Mario Rinvolucri (Vol. 5:1 p.26) can on the one hand state what he calls "coursebook thinking" as "a serious virus of the mind and the heart" and yet, at the same time, feel able to take on the role of adviser for the hot-off-the-press Pilgrims English Course published by Ediciones SM and aimed at upper secondary schools in Spain. We wonder if Mario would also dub the efforts of the Pilgrims writing team as "stultifying, anti-creative, routinising coursebook thinking" and "neat, repetitive, off-the-shelf ... packages".

It also seems grossly unfair that Mario should be allowed to muscle in with his 'counter comment' (he 'couldn't resist adding his two-penny worth', according to the Editorial). His comments effectively undermine Ruth Wajnryb's careful, balanced and fair review of Adrian Doff's Teach English which, in our opinion, constitutes a worthwhile teacher-training resource, particularly for use in the less privileged TEFL world and especially if, as with any coursebook, it is not used in an anti-creative or routinising way.

Yours,

Alan Matthews and Carol Read

Dear Editor,

Nobody is going to stop upper secondary teachers in Spain from using coursebooks so the attempt to offer them a lively one has its point, even if the tradition of relying on coursebooks is a thin, sad one.

Doff's **Teach English** is, as far as I know, the first attempt at offering teacher trainers round the world a coursebook for their work. I find it horrifying that coursebook-itis should now be marching into teacher training. I continue to feel that Doff and CUP have done ELT teacher training a major disservice by bringing out this work.

Alan and Carol, you of course have a point in accusing me of inconsistency. My voice would now be clearer had I steered clear of involvement with the SM course.

Yours,

Mario

P.S. One sure result of this correspondence is that Doff's book gets a further airing in **The Teacher Trainer**. The sensible thing to do with books one dislikes is to pass them by in silence, and this I was not wise enough to do.

THE SUPERMARKET - a frame for short, intensive, in-service training courses?
by Bryan Robinson

Sometimes teachers on short, intensive, in-service training courses can appear to their trainers to be very "greedy". However, when you think about it, that's not so unjustified really. After all, they're probably taking time out of their weekends, half-term or end-of-term holidays in order to attend; they're sacrificing family-time for work-time; perhaps they've had to pay a lot of money for the course out of their own pockets, or perhaps they're not getting paid for attending; and they do have very pressing needs in their work situations. With one group, I tried out the idea of using the supermarket as a metaphor for the course to try and parallel their hunger and desires, and to show them how together we were trying to satisfy these.

Timing: 45-50 minutes

Procedure:

1. In the second session of the course, once everyone had got to know the others reasonably well, I proposed to them that we looked together at what would be the content of our course.

2. I distributed a lot of index cards and coloured pens, and asked the group to write onto the cards the things that they expected or wanted to cover. I told them to include things that were in the brochure, and other things which were not. They started off writing individually, but then after a time formed groups of two or three to pool ideas. Those who wanted to work alone were left to do so.

3. While they thought about this, and started writing things out, I made a set of cards myself, on which I put everything which was in the brochure, and which the others seemed to have missed out. (Surprisingly enough, many of the participants didn't remember what had been advertised as the course content). I also added a number of other items which I thought would be of value: "Business people = real people?" was one such card, as this was a topic which had come up again and again in previous courses.

4. When everyone had finished, we spread everybody's cards over the floor to read them. I told the group that I wanted them to read the cards in order to remove or combine any that were repeated, or which overlapped. If anything was unclear people asked for explanations.

5. . Once this was done, I then handed out the bluetack, and drawing pins, and told them that I wanted them to arrange all of the items on one wall of the classroom. They were to imagine that this wall was a set of supermarket shelves, and so they would need to arrange like products with like, and to put up signs indicating to the customers what each section contained.

6. This part of the activity was quite lengthy, but it provided us all with a clear perspective of the course, and their group expectations of it. Priorities started to emerge, as well as differences in the level and degree of experience which they possessed. Throughout this stage I remained on the sidelines unless absolutely necessary. I wanted them to plan things for themselves, using me as another resource, not as their instructor. Some of the headings which they chose at this stage were very revealing: "Insoluble problems" was the label they gave to all of those things which depended on the Ministry, the Headteacher, or other "powers".

7. Finally, I directed them to inspect the shelves, and we added one or two products which we'd overlooked, before pronouncing ourselves satisfied.

8. This set of shelves was then to serve as our programme for the course. We worked "down the aisle", taking topics according to the pattern and priorities which we had established for them in Step 6. Each topic that was taken fromthe shelf was then placed in our shopping trolley (the opposite wall of the room) as a way of recording it.

9. Mid-way through the course, we held a review session, in which we replenished the shelves with new, and previously forgotten "products".

10. When it came to the end of the course, we were all able to look at our full "trolley", and review objectively the areas which we had covered. The items left on the shelves were those which had proved to be not that important, or which were minority interests that we hadn't had time for.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

You just don't understand: women and men in conversation by D. Tannen (1991) Virago. ISBN 1-85391-381-8. If you're interested in gender patterns in conversation, whether at the break-fast table or in the boardroom, then this book will interest you. It discusses, with many verbatim examples, asymmetry in gossip, lecturing, interrupting, competing, looking, listening, and talk-type in female-male conversations. The text is divided up into many fascinating but very short sections which make the arguments a little hard to follow.

Ideas for assemblies by A. Millard (1990) CUP. ISBN 0-521-38889-9. Slim paperback of 66 ideas for primary school assemblies. Written in recipe format for English speaking schools, some could be adapted for thematic starts (or finishes) to primary EFL classes, although the main point behind each idea is fairly abstract (e.g. 'Trust', 'Accepting people as they are',) and would necessitate some mother tongue discussion.

Rousing minds to life by R. Tharp and R. Gallimore (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-40603 X. The American authors address discontent with contemporary U.S. schooling by discussing an inter-actionist theory of cognitive development. Natural everyday examples of people helping other people to rouse memory, knowledge etc., help to articulate a theory of teaching and schooling. Part II of the book reports on the famous KEEP programme for elementary schooling. Extends Vygotsky's ideas and relates them to behavioural science.

Discourse analysis for language teachers by M. McCarthy (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-36746-8. Thorough, interesting discussion of the parts of discourse analysis that are useful to language teachers. Highlights the Sinclair-Coulthard and Hallidayan models. Liberally sprinkled with reader activities and verbatim examples of all points made.

English around the world: Sociolinguistic perspectives edited by Jenny Cheshire (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-39565-8. A large volume of papers, written by specialist authors, surveying the social context in which English is spoken in those parts of the world where it is widely used, e.g. "Social differentiation in Ottawa English", "The pronoun system in Nigerian Pidgin", "Maori English: a New Zealand myth?"

Focus on the language classroom. An introduction to classroom research for language teachers by D. Allwright and K. Bailey (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-26909-1. The book describes classroom research, (C/R is an attempt to answer the question, 'How do classroom language lessons work?'), its background principles, reviews some C/R on error treatment, classroom interaction and receptivity, and encourages teachers to start investigating their own classrooms.

Gender by G. Corbett (1991) CUP. ISBN 0-521-33845-X. A comprehensive account of gender systems in language. Over 200 languages are discussed with clear illustrations of specific types of system. Written for linguists there's plenty of terminology ('syncretism', 'alliterative concord'). Last chapter deals with general themes which emerge from the data.

Teaching and learning vocabulary by L. Taylor (1990) Prentice Hall. ISBN 13-895301-5. Based on a standard presentation, repetition and consolidation model of word teaching the book has nevertheless an unusual section on improving teachers' explanations of words.

Investigating cultural studies in foreign language teaching by M. Byram and V. Esarte-Sarries (1991) Multilingual Matters. ISBN 1-85859-019-3. The book aims to help foreign language teachers investigate their learners' views of the countries and peoples whose language they are learning. This is done by introducing cultural studies into language teaching. Much of the book refers to a research project on children learning French in Durham.

International Specialist Course

Towards a methodology of teacher training in EFL

27 March – 10 April 1992, Canterbury

This course, which was run very successfully in 1990, aims to give trainers an opportunity to come together to learn from each other and to share ideas with staff and participants as well as to receive input and have an opportunity for practice at training tasks and supervision.

The course will cover a range of subject fields and teaching techniques, including experiential training, one-to-one consultations with tutors, loop input, tasks, seminars, practical experience, participant-led workshops, panels and groups, as well as more conventional modes, such as lectures.

The Director of Studies will be **Tessa Woodward**, editor of *The Teacher Trainer*, teacher training materials writer and co-ordinator of the IATEFL SIG for teacher trainers. Tessa is also a lecturer in EFL teaching, teacher training and trainer training programmes at Pilgrims English Language Courses and Hilderstone College.

The course is targeted at those concerned with training, educating, assessing or helping teachers. It is particularly aimed at those who have been unable to obtain much specific training for their post, those who are working without much supervision, often in relative isolation, and those working with minimal resources.

There are vacancies for 30 participants.

Course fee: £945; accommodation charge: £255; total fee: £1,200.

The course sessions will be held at Rutherford College, University of Kent at Canterbury. Resident participants will be accommodated in single study bedrooms at Darwin College. Bathroom facilities will be shared.

The British Council

Further information and application forms are available from your local British Council office or from Courses Department, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

International Specialist Course

Distance learning for English language teacher development

4 – 15 May 1992, Birmingham

The aims of this course are:

1 to present an overview of issues in distance learning which are relevant to the design, implementation and evaluation of teacher development programmes

2 to provide a forum for the exploration of these issues with specialists and fellow participants

3 to offer the opportunity for participants to establish a framework for distance learning applications in their own professional environments

Topics covered will include: the concept of distance education; planning and management; materials; support; teacher development.

The course will be directed by **Keith Richards** and **Dr Peter Roe** of the Language Studies Unit, Aston University.

There are vacancies for 24 participants.

Total fee: £1,550 (inclusive of accommodation)

Participants will be accommodated in single en suite study bedrooms in the James Gracie Centre, situated in the residential area of Moseley, about three miles from the centre of Birmingham.

Further information and application forms are available from your local British Council office or from Courses Department, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

The British Council

Institute for Applied Language Studies - University of Edinburgh

COURSES FOR TEACHERS 1991-92

CERTIFICATED COURSES

- **UCLES/RSA Dip. TEFLA:** 10 weeks, start October/March.
- **RSA Dip. TFLA by distance learning:** 9 months (includes face-to-face component).
- **Advanced Certificate in ELT:** 10 weeks, start October/March.

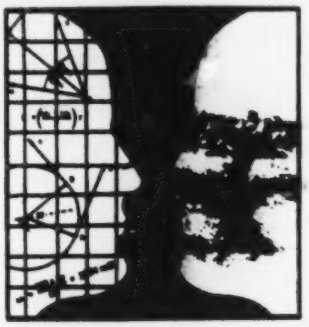
NEW **Advanced Certificate in ELT by distance learning:** 12-15 months (includes short residential block).

SHORT SUMMER COURSES

- Teaching and Learning English
- Drama for TEFL
- Grammar and the Communicative Teaching of English
- Teaching English for Specific Purposes
- Teaching English for Business
- Teaching English for Medical Purposes
- English for Academic Purposes (ELT/AL)

Short courses, seminars and consultancies can also be offered worldwide.

For further information, contact: *Ian McGrath, Development Coordinator: Teacher Education, Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh, 21 Hill Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9DP. Tel: 031-650 6200 Fax: 031-667 5927.*



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Brochure from: Michael Lawlor

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Kemble, Glos. GL7 6AD
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International Specialist Course

Management in ELT: a course for advisers, inspectors and teacher trainers

29 March – 10 April 1992, Lancaster

The major aim of the course is to examine how ideas from the world of management can help in maintaining and developing an effective teaching force. The programme will focus on the role of the inspector, adviser and teacher trainer in assisting teachers in both pre- and in-service situations.

The course will offer lectures and guided discussions as well as workshops for more intensive analysis of topics of particular importance. A feature of the course will be presentations by course participants on issues relating to their own particular home situation.

The following are among the issues to be addressed: basic principles of management; the development of inspector/adviser expertise; the management and content of training; continuing support for the serving teacher; managing change.

The Director of Studies will be **Tom Hutchinson** of the Institute for English Language Education, University of Lancaster.

It is expected that participants on the course will be experienced personnel occupying positions of responsibility in ELT. This will include inspectors, advisers, teacher educators, heads of departments and personnel involved in collaborative language projects overseas. Both native and non-native speakers are eligible.

There are vacancies for 30 participants.

Total fee: £1,185.

The course will be held at the University of Lancaster, where participants will be accommodated in single study bedrooms in a university hall of residence.

The British Council

Further information and application forms are available from your local British Council office or from Courses Department, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

PILGRIMS COURSES FOR TEACHERS AND TEACHER TRAINERS 1992

COURSES IN CANTERBURY

At our Summer Institute at the University of Kent at Canterbury, Pilgrims offer a range of Residential Courses for Teachers and Teacher Trainers:

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Practical Methodology for:	
• Teaching Business and Professional People	July, August, September
• Teaching Adults	July, August
• Inexperienced Teachers	July
• Teaching Young Children Aged 7-11	July, August
• Teaching Young People	July, August

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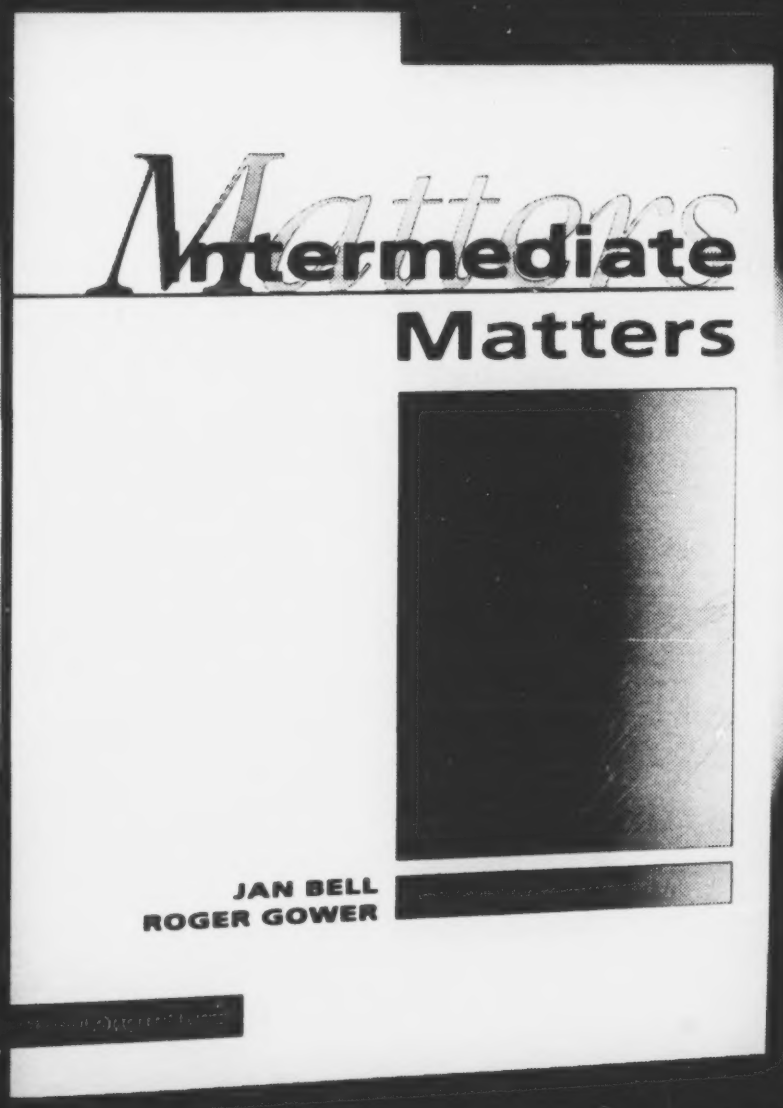
Fax: (0227) 459027

Pilgrims

TEACHING QUALITY



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